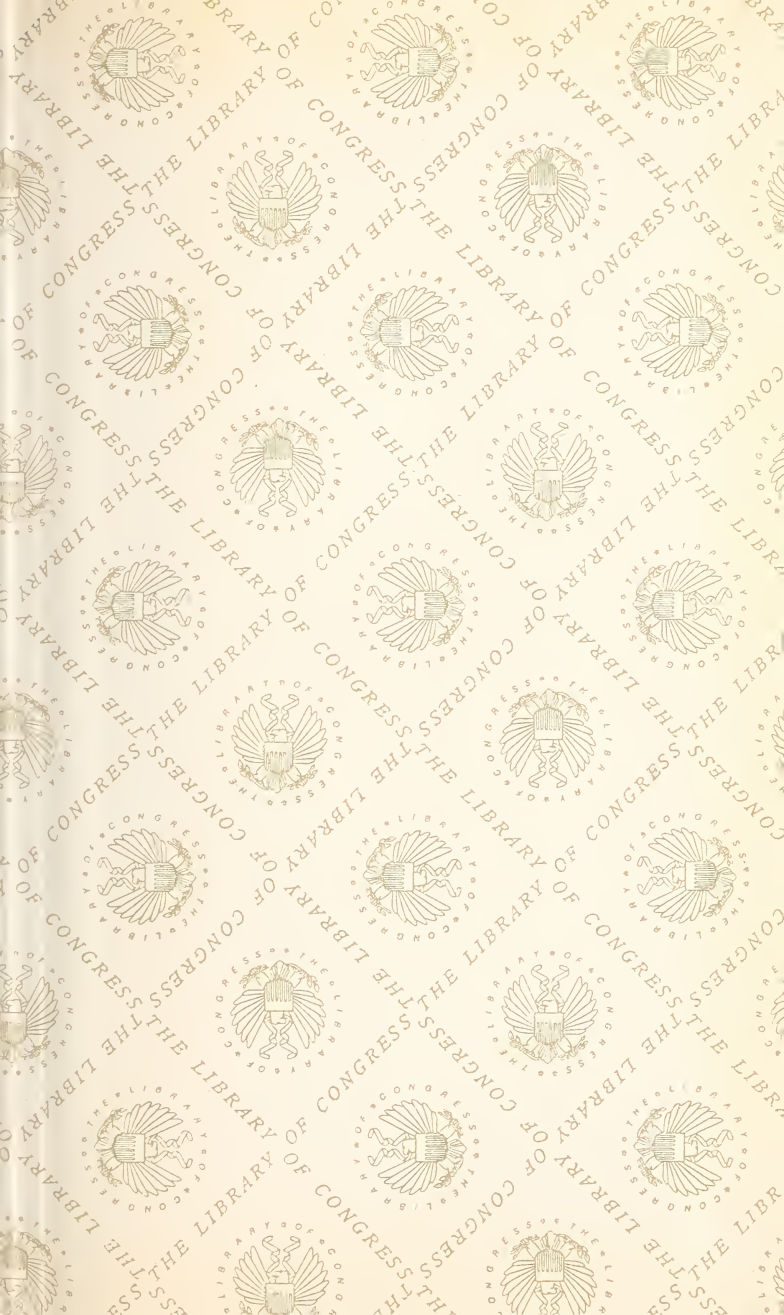


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# THE EPISCOPACY

—OF THE—

*A. M. E. CHURCH,*

—OR—

The Necessity for an Ample force of Bishops,

—BY—

REV. JAMES H. A. JOHNSON, D. D.

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1888.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE little volume that is hereby presented to the public, has been formed according to the necessity of the times. The whole design prevailing in its composition, is to bring the effective element of the Church to a conclusion to do what will be a lasting benefit to the colored race in particular, and all mankind in general. It is conceived that the only absolute method of carrying on church work, is by complete organization. Indeed, this may be considered as the process applicable to all fields of labor controlled by persons in a collective sense.

No one can reasonably deny that an Episcopal organization ought to be carried to the full extent of its efficiency. Some who have not much regard for the episcopacy may attempt to deny it: but those who are *true* to such a form of government would not think of denying it. They would rather exert every means within their power to extend, confirm, build up and invigorate this branch of ecclesiastical government, so that it might be more efficient in its labors for the conversion of the world.

Deep cuts are made with sharp axes; heavy blows are struck with large hammers. He who would produce the best results in any given direction, will appreciate, secure, preserve and improve the implements with which he can do it. He will not knock the edge from his axe, nor lessen the size of his hammer.

If the African Methodist Episcopal Church is a Methodist *Episcopal* organization, common sense and reason tell us that an increase of its influence depends upon the force and fulness of its episcopacy. You cannot circumscribe and weaken this without doing injury to the organization. Let the head grow, multiply the convolutions of the brain, fire up the intellect and you sustain the power that controls the whole body—arms, legs and feet. Uphold an episcopacy according to the necessity of the times, and you make stronger the organization that it controls.

This little book is designed to induce thinking men to see the importance of this fact and to act in accordance with it. The author hopes that they will read, ponder and see every thing set forth on the several pages, and then conclude that nothing less than the establishment of a full force of Bishops with Presiding Elders will develop the latent power of the A. M. E. Church. It is hoped that they will see that an ample force of Bishops will make the Church strongly episcopal, and an extended Presiding Eldership will make it stongly Methodist.

Hagerstown, Md., Feb. 17th, 1833.



# More Bishops.

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## PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

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**D**OES the A. M. E. Church need more Bishops? Yes. This question now propounded and answered in the affirmative is to be considered in the light of ruling facts and not according to somebody's crude opinion. It is not enough to say, "We need no more Bishops." And neither does it settle the matter to bring the subject of Bishops in co-relation with that of presiding elders. The sphere of each is different and each subserves a different purpose. Rev. Robert F. Wayman understands the matter clearly. And so should every man who speaks of it, or attempts to write upon it. The subject is of such vast importance, particularly at this time, that it should be pondered—that is, the election of more Bishops—in the gravest manner for the good of the Church and not for the interest of any chafing aspirants. The Church and the people are to be taken into consideration to see what is the best thing that can be done for them. The wire-pulling age has displeased God and passed away, and now has come the time for thinkers of the Church, untrammelled, to observe its needs and make selections. This making of Bishops and breaking of Bishops belongs unto the Lord. None should regard it as a subject like unto those which belong unto political conventions. If it be holy, it is sacrilege to treat it in a political manner, and dangerous for candidates to seek election by this method. If it be God's work no one is seeking the glory of God when he puts himself forth, burning up with zeal, as he says :—

"I want to be a Bishop,  
And with the Bishops stand;  
A high degree of salary,  
And a gavel in my hand."

It has always been the opinion of the writer, that election to this office ought to be effected by brethren of a General Conference, after mature, prayerful deliberation for the guidance

of Almighty God. It requires just such a course as this, to make the consummation of the work substantial and secure. No man's carnal aspirations have anything to do with it. The object is holy and divine; and God claims the right to manage it. Matters of such importance concerning his Church, belong unto him. Take, for instance, the undertaking to establish a king over Israel. Samuel thought one way and the Lord thought another way. When Samuel was mistaken in his opinion of Eliab, he was told that "man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." And so Abinadab and Shammah and the several sons of Jesse had to pass before Samuel before God settled it in his mind that David was to be made king.

When Judas Iscariot, the chief master in ecclesiastical treachery, put his nefarious head in a halter and made a vacancy in the primitive bishopric, there was no cabal to forward on any individual ambition for the office. There was no selfish exertion on the part of any to reach the position, that he might have his "kith and kin" to go before him with timbrel and dance saying, "Great is the successor of Iscariot! Great is the successor of Iscariot!"

No, no! The distinguished first General Conference of one hundred and twenty persons, that assembled at that time, laid the election right before the Lord, appointed Barsabas and Matthias and then prayed, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship from which Judas, by transgression, fell, that he might go to his own place."

All this was done before they cast their lots, and selected Matthias to fill the sacred office. Neither one of the candidates went into electioneering schemes to forward on his own personal interest and attain success. There was no jealousy, envy, furor and excitement in efforts to reach this holy office by election and installment. It was all put into the hands of God and settled in a godly manner.

Even the Church of Rome, to-day, looks upon this as the only proper course for it to pursue when there is to be promotion to any high position. It is asserted that there would be no tolerancy of any one who should be found manifesting ambition to be ordained unto the cardinalate, and that he would at once be discarded by the Pope. Such a course keeps the

Church from degenerating into a political machine, and from a consequent growth of corruption. No such an organization can be so abused without reaching this direful end; nor can the instigators of this condition be safe from heaven's vengeance. What right has any man in any divine institution to worm himself into any position that God does not will that he should fill? Uzzah was all right when he was acting as a driver of the new cart bearing the ark, but when he put forth his hand and took hold of the ark because it shook as it went over Nachon's threshing floor, he did what God had not ordained him to do in this sacred matter, and was therefore smitten and slain by the Lord. Ambition for aggrandizement is ungodly.

No man should be regarded as a worthy candidate for the episcopacy when he settles down upon himself and in his heart nominates himself, and then like a fox studies out how many crooked ways of policy he shall go to reach the desired end. He should keep the fate of Uzzah before his eyes and say, "If the Lord wants me it is all right; if he does not, I have no business there." The time is now approaching for the A. M. E. Church to elect more brethren to the episcopal office, and so it behooves all of us, *ad interim*, to weigh this matter well, that we may come to a just conclusion.

The writer, for the first time, proposes to discuss the subject so far as he is able, in all its various bearings.


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## CHAPTER II.

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### THE PRESENT CONDITION OF OUR EPISCOPACY.

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T the last General Conference, the Church had nine Bishops and one *quasi* Bishop. I hope no one will misarticulate this and say "one crazy Bishop." Since that Conference the number nine has been diminished until it has come down, by death, to the number six. No one pre-conceived such mortality and diminution. He certainly did not form an idea that death would take those who have gone as his first victims. There were older ones and feebler ones, apparently, who would be for him as easier prey. But, as like lightning, no one knows where it will strike; no one knows who will be first brought down by the cold, keen sickle's edge. By one thrust down came Dickerson; by another down came Cain;

and then, by one sudden stroke, as if the instrument had been sharpened for the purpose, Shorter was left withering on the ghastly field of harvest. And so went the young, and so went the old, leaving it for us to say :—

“There is a reaper whose name is death,  
And with his sickle keen  
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,  
And the flowers which grow between.”

Let us now then make an inspection of the remnant of the force: Bishops Payne, Wayman, Campbell, Brown, Ward and Turner are the active officials remaining with us. But one-half of them are not in a vigorous condition. Age has signally effected them and disease is making inroads upon some of them. The vitality of youth has passed away and the strength of manhood at the oxen and lion age has gone. By some of them the race has been fully run, even to the last day of three score years and ten. Faithful indeed have they been in the arduous pursuit of their duties, but it is impossible for them to show this energy now. He who goes beyond his sixtieth year, is getting on to be an old man. He who has reached his seventieth year, is an old man. He who goes five years beyond this period, is a very old man. The occupants of our episcopal bench are now chiefly old men, and almost every one of them, if they should live, would be a septuagenarian and one an octogenarian before the General Conference of 1892. At this rate, in such a short time, the Church would have an actually superannuated Board of Bishops. But it is not reasonable to suppose that time would be so accommodating as to allow the Church even this feeble board. By all probability at least three would be taken to that “bourne whence no traveler returns.” What then? Why, the Church would have but three weak and well-worn men to perform the onerous duties of the episcopal office. By the natural course of events it is undeniable that the personality of the episcopal board is gradually, if not rapidly losing power.

Bishop D. A. Payne, standing now at a ripe, old age, attained by the observance of an inimitable systematic method of living, is far from being the vigorous, energetic, persevering Payne he was twenty years ago. It is impossible for him to be what he has been, or do what he has done. Necessity will soon compel us to recognize him as Bishop *emeritus*.

Jabez P. Campbell, truly termed the “Grand Old Man,” and John M. Brown, bland and refined and great as a church


worker, are both being stopped upon the ratchet and are not now able to move in every direction according to former will. Time declares that they must soon be classed as the *emeriti* worthy of all honor and support. Taking the Board now in its most favorable light, there is no method of reasoning by which it can be interpreted to be adequate to this advanced age of physical force, electric motion and general expansion. In every generation we find that the larger driving wheels are leaving the smaller ones behind, and that the amount of steam that would make the smaller revolve fast enough to keep up with the larger, would certainly burst the boiler.

Bishop Wayman and Bishop Turner are still pretty strong men, but they cannot continually rush along through all creation and different parts of the United States besides and attend to the work of a dozen Bishops and forever remain in a good condition. The former being within five years of the end of his allotted time, suddenly must fail and leave a still heavier burden on his stronger collaborator. Bishop Turner is the youngest man on the board, and still the aggregate age of all of them is 403 years. This gives us an average of a fraction more than 67 years for every incumbent. This brings us up to the point now of considering the relative amount of intellectual strength. Every philosopher knows that physical powers enervated by age, produce a telling effect upon the mind. They restrain the intellectual operations to such an extent that it is impossible for conclusions to be reached as clearly as they can be at a better stage of existence. The mind cannot go through the same gymnastic feats, nor show the same tenacity of purpose, nor stand the same perplexities. If any one should contradict this, let him turn his attention to the fact that upon this ground the United States government retires its generals when they attain the age of sixty-eight. This same rule is applicable to our Episcopal Board. The incumbents who, twelve years ago, traversed the meandering paths of science, plunged into the difficulties of various important problems, illuminated the literary field with flashes of their genius and magnetized the admirers who surrounded them, have not that same degree of intellectual force to-day. The eyes are growing dim and the fire is abating. Good they may be for counsel, but not so good for strength. The intellectual contests which were jollifications to them in days gone by, would be headaches, heartaches and death at the present time. And still those who say, "We want no more Bishops," do not seem to take these points into consideration.

## CHAPTER III.

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THE GREAT EPISCOPAL WORK THAT IS TO BE  
PERFORMED.

HE duties of a Bishop are over and above those of a presiding elder. They are multifarious and such as demand the highest degree of ability. The very fact that "he shall travel at large through his district and visit every circuit and station and oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the societies in his district," makes it impracticable for him, impossible for him, to be meddling with everybody else's business and, at the same time, to be attending to his own duty. Strict attention to the demands of three Conferences, forming one district, is about as much labor as can be performed by any one man in the course of one year. And this labor should be performed to the very letter of the law. The Bishop shall "visit every circuit and station \* \* \* in his district." Now, then, to comprehend the absorbiug nature of this task alone, we will give sixty appointments to a Conference and one hundred and eighty to his district. This will cause us to take into consideration the average of two societies to an appointment, and the aggregating of 360 societies to be brought under episcopal observation and inspection. Every one of these societies, to give inspiration to the people, should be visited by the Bishop in the course of one year. This within itself is quite a task; for it is clearly seen that there are almost as many societies as there are days in the year. Now, taking this part alone of the matter, temporally and spiritually, and in every particular, into consideration, it may be asserted that this is not the least important part of his varied duty. It is of the greatest advantage to the Church in general for a Bishop to give his presence to every part of his district. He by this means encourages the ministers and strengthens the people. But if he has to run into everybody's district, he cannot completely travel through his own, and his own must proportionately suffer for a want of his presence.

And now, moreover, to make his itinerancy productive of the best results in this direction, he is to prepare himself for it. He is to have time to study out sermons and addresses for the people, so that he may give them new thoughts and theories all along the line. In advanced ideas he should lead the very ministry subordinated to his authority. He should in all



respects qualify himself to stand in his district abreast of the times. To do this he should resort to his library and there employ all the means at his command. This requires labor.

Then, again, there is an amount of correspondence incidental to the work in his district that must receive his serious attention. It is his duty to give every letter and every note a respectful consideration. This must be done for a preservation of the dignity of his office and to make him as honorable, at least, as a common politician. The interest of the Church requires him to exercise much care relative to his civility. But he cannot do it, even with an amanuensis, when he is given up to an unreasonable amount of time on the highways. Let any Bishop systematically discharge his duty in a district composed of the Baltimore, Virginia and North Carolina Conferences and it will be discerned that he has as much as he can do to fully manage his correspondence.

Let again any one do the traveling commanded to be done in such a district—and it is written, “He shall not exercise his episcopal office in any degree over the Church unless he travel at large throughout his district”—and it will be made patent that by the time he has gone into every part of Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina, dedicated churches, held conferences, paid extra visits, politely attended to all his correspondence, and prepared new sermons and addresses, he has done all that he could do in the course of one year. And yet all this must be done; and besides this, there are little incidental duties which must also be performed to give polish to his episcopal work. He is to study parliamentary usages, and the manners becoming to a presiding officer, and the difference between law and his *ipse dixit*, and the dignity of his position and the decorum that is due to deliberative bodies. He is to do all these things and have prosperity in his district. The great work before him does not consist in his jumping from place to place, but in exercising himself to the end of leaving deep and everlasting footprints all along his journey. The all-important question is, What has he done? Not, Where has he been? The work to be done in any district composed of three conferences—and there should not be more—is a herculean one, particular and all-absorbing. In the present day it requires great consideration, and men adapted to it.

People are to be wrought upon outside of the Church and inside of the Church. White and black are to be brought un-

der the influence of an episcopacy that will demand their respect and increase the merit of the A. M. E. organization. Everywhere successful competition is to be made with the spirit of the present age. Heresies are to be uprooted, intellectual skill is to be matched and every right of the people is to be considered worthy of a sacred advocacy.

In all of this it is manifest to every wise observer, that a sufficient episcopal force must be established for the benefit of the coming generation. Strength here, is advancement. Weakness, is retrogression. Inadequacy of force, is profound confusion. The adaptation of duties to a sparsity of agents is the muddling of interests and a clogging of the wheels of ecclesiastical progress.

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## CHAPTER IV.

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### THE CHARACTER OF THE MEN NEEDED FOR THE EPISCOPAL OFFICE.

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GENERATION has passed away since the organization of our present Board of Bishops. Old methods have been superseded by new ones. The advancement of the present times requires agents and institutions in keeping with it. Every step that can be taken in harmony with this progression is essential to the welfare of all social forms of government. The accuracy of adaptation, which within itself is promotional, must be observed at this time as the effectual means of meeting the demands of the hour.

The A. M. E. Church, as an established institution, has increased its influence until it has become conspicuously identified as one of the important organized bodies of this enlightened age. All its machinery, therefore, is to be managed for its continual growth. Its leading men are to be fully qualified for this part of the business: and none more so than those who fill the episcopal office. They should be strong, if possible, in every particular. They should, anyhow, in a general sense be free from petty jealousies, disgusting egotism—for egoism is bad enough,—free from envy, malice and revenge; free from levity, treachery and deceit. Treachery! What man is fit for a leading position who is imbued with such a spirit? As well might you make a wolf the watch-dog of a sheep-cote; or a

rattlesnake the fostering mother of a dovelet's nest. None but the pure in heart should be put in high places. The times require men for the Church and men for high positions in the Church who have an "eye single to the glory of God."

They should be strong, faithful, well-trained, self-sacrificing, God fearing men—men able, too, both in body and in mind. This has been the reason why the distinguished Daniel A. Payne has been able to render such valuable services for the last thirty-five years in the episcopacy of the A. M. E. Church. The times now demand just such men. A vast expansion of territory is to be traveled, cultured minds are to be met and the work of grace is to be extended amongst all classes of the people.

More Bishops are needed to attend to this work in detail, and must be fitted for the purpose. They must be religious men with brains and education. They should be great men, able to govern other men, without showing enmity and prejudice. The sacred charge committed to them should be unto them as the children of their own family around the fireside. Never should they have the disposition to make their appointments with the least degree of malice toward anyone. So well formed should be the character of a man for benevolence and love in this position that he should take conspicuously the deepest interest in the temporal, as well as the spiritual welfare of the brethren at his command. He should strive to build them up and sympathize with them, as Bishop Campbell has done with tears in his eyes. He who is without such feeling, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Men for this position should be the meekest, the kindest and the humblest men within the borders of a Church. They should be those who would be trampled upon rather than those who would trample upon anybody. They should not be men who would be puffed up with a lordly idea of their office: for God never ordained the position (if he did ordain it) to be accepted in any such spirit. He says, "A Bishop must be blameless as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy temperate."

Again, this is a day of literature and science. It is for this reason, then, that men with a marked degree of such attainments—men versed in languages—Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and other languages and different branches of science, should be

added to the Board. Some of the best educated, good men, should be selected to fill the office, so that the Church might have strong defenders of the faith in every time of need.

In connection with these there should be men of sterling common sense. Such are needed for the safe management of the affairs of the Church and should be elected on their merit. It is wise to get as much brain and education as possible. The best and strongest men should be selected for this office. Some of this class are not noted for education, but their strong minds, judicial qualifications and rich fund of information and sense of equity, make them men of the most available kind for the important office under consideration. Such as these are no trucklers, seeking peace at the sacrifice of righteousness. You find in them men of courage and decision to act for the best interests of the Church. You find them to be men of truth, like Bishop Payne, whose word can be relied upon whenever any issue is staked upon it. A deceptive man in the episcopacy—an equivocator—is an abomination in the sight of God and a disgrace to any denomination. The sooner he is deposed, if he ever attains unto the office, the better it is for all grades of the Christian family.

It is necessary, furthermore, for us to turn our attention to men of refinement. This is the time when people are making progress in this direction and should have men with accomplishments exalted over them. Refinement on the part of a presiding officer is one of the traits by which he secures the respect of the members of his assembly. It is the principal trait and should be demanded by every member of any assembly. It should be manifested in the presidiary exercised over all deliberations and all discussions. When this is not done, then the presidiary business becomes obnoxious and intolerable.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL MEN NEEDED FOR THE EPISCOPAL OFFICE.

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**B**AD ecclesiastical economy fails to adapt the needed means to a successful end. It does not comprehend the appliances by which church work is put into a flourishing spiritual and temporal condition. Hence, it develops itself into parsimonious theories which, when put into practice, dwarf

all the vital interests of church organization. Its management does by no means bring out full strength to full profit. The idea that it advances is, that an inadequate number of agents is far more profitable than a sufficient number of them. And so it piles up a few dollars and places a few Bishops behind them and loses sight of every thing else but the dollars; and pretends to be zealous for the prosperity of the Church. It makes the competency of force secondary to the preservation of money, and fails to see the disadvantage of the inconsistency.

We are now, though, at a period when ecclesiastical folly and superficial assertions must be set aside. This is the time when prudence must stand forth in the light of reason. It must come and decide the question. How many more brethren shall we have elected as additional Bishops? Some now put the number down to a very small figure, but none touch the point of adequacy.

When Bishop Turner, some years ago, said: "We should have a Bishop for every state," there were many to laugh at his predication; but few to see the force of it. I have thought the suggestion over and over, and have come to the conclusion that we should have at all times at least a sufficient number of Bishops to carry on the work; and so, after bringing the matter down to a practical consideration, I find it clear to my mind that at the next General Conference eight additional, God-fearing, meek and lowly men should be elected to the episcopal office. I claim this, although I imagine that I see popped eyes of the parsimonious almost flying out of their heads whilst they scream out: *What! Eight?*

Yes, eight. A close and clear study of the work before us will prove it to any systematic mind that nothing less than this number will be sufficient to meet the demands and carry the A. M. E. Church to that degree of efficiency it should reach in this progressive age. It is necessary now to command the work of the Church in detail and to see that every part of it receives due attention. Such management every common sense person sees, requires a full force of agents which must be established to keep the Church from suffering loss.

Eight men added to the present number—not for the purpose of getting a big salary, nor for the purpose of having honor conferred upon them, but added to the number to do the nec-

essary work for the good of the Church—would make a force hardly equal to the demand on taking up the work in detail.

Every one of the fourteen would find himself overburdened with duty. This is true. The magnitude of the work in the A. M. E. Church is so great that fourteen men in the episcopate would find themselves taxed to their uttermost capacity to fully perform it in detail. I put stress upon this term, "detail," because it never has been observed in our general operations, notwithstanding its essentiality to the substantial prosperity of the Church. All good progressive organizations practically observe it, whilst others, anaconda like, take the job in a lump and think they have done great things, although they lie staggered by the act.

The Catholic Church, one of the most thoroughly organized bodies in the world, has its clerical agents elected, appointed and situated to do its work in detail according to demand and not according to a parsimonious view of expenditure. Men first and money afterward, seems to be its wise, ruling motto.

The Episcopal Church, another well organized religious body, seeing the absolute necessity of pursuing such a course, submits its work into the hands of sixty Bishops. And still there are some poor fellows in the A. M. E. Church who almost get the St. Vitus Dance when you talk to them of more than six. You apparently see a twitching of their mouths, a jerking of their fingers and a swagging of their lower limbs when you mention the number. Happy are you if you do not have to run and get a silver spoon to put between their teeth whilst in their agony of fits. Their first consideration is more money by more Bishops: and then the feeling displayed is as though it emanated from the fact, that each one had to pay every new Bishop out of his own pocket. It is high time now that the work of God should be taken on its merit in the A. M. E. Church and subordinated to spiritual demands and not to paltry sums of gold.

A sufficient corps of Bishops, fourteen of them, each one having a district composed of three conferences, would make just so much more in the A. M. E. Church of a body of evangelists to go throughout the land preaching the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Christ. And do you tell me that whilst this point is to be considered, you should view the subject in a temporal light? Salary in the face of this comes up only for a secondary consideration. It matters not whether the Bishops

get a big salary or a small one just so there is a sufficient number to observe the demands of the Church. They are to be devoted to their office for this purpose and are commanded to be "not greedy of filthy lucre."

The Church should select them, elect them and then reasonably pay them according to its ability. He who is seeking either the honor or money of the office, is fit for neither. Let us then, at this important period, bring the matter down to a proper degree and select, as is necessary to be done, eight good, efficient men for the office. May God help us to bring them forth in our next number.

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## CHAPTER VI.

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### THE MEN SUITABLE FOR ELECTION TO THE EPISCOPAL OFFICE.

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**W**E have reached the subject, now, that requires more judiciousness and fervent prayer than any other in the catalogue. Eight more additional men to the episcopacy are demanded for the future prosperity of our Church. The selection of these is an undertaking of the highest moment. All the qualifications for the office are to be weighed in the gravest maner : and not the least among these are :—

A-ffection,  
B-landness,  
I-ntelligence,  
S-incerity,  
H-onesty,  
O-rthodoxy,  
P-iety.

These, in connection with a great many others, are to be sought after and prayerfully settled without regard to topographical sections. Righteousness would say, "If they can be found no where else but in one place, pick them up and scatter them over the country." The Church now needs eight of its best qualified men for the episcopal office—eight intellectually and physically qualified men. These should be selected outside of favoritism and organized combinations; and they should be men sound in body and in mind.

And, moreover, strict attention should be paid to their ecclesiastical standing—not so much in a connexional sense as in a denominational sense. They should be required to be manfully devoted to the plainest and highest principles of Methodism, and free from any heresies or ritualistic observances which conflict with the character of the denomination as led on by Whitfield and the Wesleys. Men to be selected for the Bishopric of the A. M. E. Church should be the plainest kind of men in costume, word and doctrine. For the preservation of the simplicity of the denomination, this is a topic for the profoundest consideration. Let it be ignored and the natural consequence will be a confusion of service and a conflict of ideas. Very careful, indeed, then, should the Church be in selecting men for this responsible office. It is not an easy matter, and should be done by earnestly soliciting Divine guidance. Many good men, according to human preference and an appreciation, might be mentioned because of their peculiar attainments. If we were going to make an increase on the ground of classical qualification, we could make the most credible kind of showing by taking B. F. Lee, B. T. Tanner, T. G. Steward, John G. Mitchell, Jos. S. Thompson and J. C. Ayler. But there are a multiplicity of features which are to be picked out and blended together for consideration, in making the holy combination. The writer has endeavored to pursue such a course as this in canvassing the great body of meritorious men making up the ministry of the Church. Being free from any axe-grinding arrangement and from all mutualized tickling business, he has endeavored to settle his mind upon men according to their qualification. And so, in doing this, he turned his attention, first, to the general attributes prerequisite to their selection, and looked for brain power, religion, experience and learning. A conclusion has been reached, though only by careful study and examination. We think the ones whom we have put down in our minds, embrace in the aggregate the qualifications needed to give more efficiency to the episcopacy.

1. *Dr. Benjamin F. Lee* may be presented on the ground of his learning, prestige and grace.

2. *Dr. James A. Handy* is a man of brains, ingenuity, information and experience. It is no exaggeration to say that he is one of the most remarkable men in the Church. He is a thinker of the first order, and has common sense enough to swallow down a cart-load of scientific speculators. He is a



business man besides, and can carry on a versatility of operations. The power of his mind has affected the Church for good throughout the length and breadth of the land.

3. *Dr. Wm. H. Hunter* is noted for mental strength, moral courage and decision of character. He is, moreover, as clean and as pure as the inside of a fresh banana. If wisdom should prevail in the General Conference, he will certainly be elected as one of the eight additional Bishops. The times demand him.

4. *Rev. Moses B. Salters* is just the very man to add mildness, devotion and humility to the Board. He would, it may safely be assumed, be just the kind, fatherly sort of man that ought to be seen in every one who claims to be a Bishop. He would never be the one to "boycott" preachers because he could not lead them by their noses. We want more Bishops to get just so much more of the qualities manifested by him.

5. *Dr. George T. Watkins* is not so well known in the Church as some other men. But he is strong where he is known, and is distinguished for learning, loyalty and affection. He is as true to the Church as a "needle is to the pole," and would defend the interests of the brethren and the Church to the uttermost.

6. *Dr. John G. Mitchell* is a man characteristically given to deliberation and gravity of demeanor. His scientific skill is eminent, and makes him influential in the sight of scholars.

7. *Rev. Cornelius T. Shaffer* is a man of practical uniformity, dignity and simplicity. His self-possession is evinced to such a marked extent, that he would be able to increase the influence of the Board and reflect credit upon the Church.

8. *Dr. Benjamin T. Tanner* is one of the most widely known men in the Church, and has done an immense amount of literary work. He is known on both sides of the Atlantic, and is esteemed because of the uprightness of his life. He is erudite and confirmed in all the methods of his Church. Standing in the Church as a Bishop, he would gain the respect of all classes, and make more potential the colored race of America.

9. *Rev. A. Grant*, of Texas, is a man whose energy and perseverance would make him an important agent in pushing on the work in his State. He is large and commanding in his appearance, and has a pleasing address. He would add much strength to the force. He is presented for consideration.

These brethren would make worthy candidates and are brought forth for the glory and honor of God. They are not to be understood, as is vulgarly and disgustingly said—"trotted out," as though they were horses or politicians; but as reverentially mentioned or nominated for the Church to think on them as suitable persons to be elected to the episcopacy, for the purpose of doing the stupendous tasks which a few Bishops have been striving to do for a number of years, but have failed in doing, because they have been burdened with more than three conferences. Let these brethren be talked of in a complimentary manner and carried to the Lord in the spirit of prayer, that their election may be a blessing to the Church.

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## CHAPTER VII.

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### THE EPISCOPAL COMPLEMENT THAT SHOULD BE KEPT IN EXISTENCE.

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**E**IGHT more Bishops added to the Board would make the complement fourteen. This number would clearly meet the demands of the extended connection. It is the only number that is adequate to the demand. The work to be done stretches from the borders of Canada to the remotest point in Florida, and from the Pacific Coast in California to the Atlantic boundary in New England. The churches which are to be supervised are counted by thousands; and the number of members by hundreds of thousands. These, for prosperity, are to be brought directly under episcopal influence. Every church and every congregation is to be made familiar with the existing heads of the Church. How can this be done? By submitting to two or three Bishops who imagine they can do it? No. It can be done only by the elders of the connection fully comprehending the nature of the work and making provision for it.

Now, then, let us call their attention to a few ruling, stubborn facts. We will not take the extravagant computation of membership, although that would make our position still stronger, but the probable number in existence—the minimum at least—that is 200,000. All of these should be brought fully under episcopal influence by the making of such arrangements as

will enable the Bishops to reach them. This can be done by cutting up the 200,000 into just so many parts as can be handled by just so many Bishops. Suppose we say that we will divide this great number of members into fourteen parts. Then it is observed that we would have 14,285 members in each episcopal district, or that each Bishop would have a district composed of three conferences and a command of all the floating members of the congregations. This would make a task that would require all his time, talent and energy to put his district in the highest state of efficiency, to make the people more religious, to increase the finances, and to make other denominations more appreciative of the connection. This seems to be as plain as daylight. Military power in manipulating such a vast body of men would divide them into 40 parts, that each might have a general. Forty generals would be appointed that each might command 5,000 men. The expense would be an after consideration, from the very fact that efficiency would be the all important object. And this, too, must be conceded in the regulation of the Church.

There should be fourteen Bishops always kept on hand. When one passes away speedily, another ought to be put in his place. A smashing up of districts is a smashing up of advantages. It is in the highest degree detrimental to the connection. It breaks down that which was built up by the General Conference and makes confusion, if not a mild degree of anarchy. What would be the case in military government if, on the death of a general, there should be a smashing up of the brigade? Would it be regarded as a good thing, because of the death of a governor, to smash up a State? What good, then, can come of smashing up episcopal districts? This is a vital point, and this has been a smashing age; but the General Conference ought to see well to it that smashing is done no more. The Church cannot thrive under a smashing government; so then, let every needed provision be made to keep intact all the important machinery, until the time comes for it to be changed by the power that made it. Whenever districts are formed and a number of Bishops are made, common sense alone tells us that some arrangement ought to be instituted to keep them in existence during a quadrennium. The magnitude of the Church work now, in consideration of the territory and number of members embraced in it, requires us to divide

it into fourteen districts and to put these districts under fourteen Bishops.

This accurate systemization of the work would advance the interests of the connection to a greater extent than ever has been done by any other process. It would give us full control of all ecclesiastical minutia conducive to the growth of all our various departments. It would place the A. M. E. Church before the world as one of the most effectually organized religious bodies in it. And this of itself would beget a higher degree of substantial respect. Loyal adhesion to the fundamental law, and a prayerful study of certain subjects belonging to the Church government, make the writer see clearly that such a systemization would increase the grandeur and glory and influence of this strong organization.

Episcopal grace communicated (as it cannot be done now, because of the present limitation and confusion) to every obscure part of the Connection would arouse the most indifferent followers into action. It would lay hold of all the talent that now slumbers in darkness in every nook and corner, and make it contributive to the increased power of the Connection. Fourteen good men in this wise ordained and commissioned as Episcopal heralds throughout the land would do more in one year than six could do in two.

Eight more added to the present number would be like putting an equal number of faithful horses to a team of six, staggering under a heavy load. None can fail to see this but those who are so blind they will not see. This would make an adequate complement; and this is that upon which the General Conference should rest its decision. Without doing this there is never any meeting of demands nor bounds set to diminution. The work that is to be done may from time to time receive only partial attention, and the Bishops who are to do it may dwindle down from nine to six, and from six to one: and then the smashing business would cease, and virtual disintegration would be the consequence. Is it not high time, then, that the General Conference had comprehended this important matter and acted upon it?

It should ascertain for itself the precise number of Bishops needed; and then designate them and provide the means of keeping the designated number in existence. The course heretofore pursued has been seemingly on the assumption that a few fellows wanted to be made Bishops, and that the confer-

ence had to make them, and have that as the end of it ; so that if they lived, they lived ; and if they died, they died. Better polity, though, now needs a better conception.

We want so many districts firm, well-organized and indestructible by any power *ad interim*. Then we want it as a recognized necessity that so many Bishops shall always be kept in office to attend to those districts. Nothing less than this can be conceded as a substantial form of government.

This would signally increase the dignity of every district. It would confirm the fact that each Bishop had at his command something even more durable than even his own existence. He might die, but the charge would remain demanding his successor, and it would be known that his successor had to be elected. The Easton Diocese of the Episcopal Church in the State of Maryland, some time ago lost its Bishop, and remained bishopless until the meeting of the convention ; a successor was then elected to the poor, uninviting position, but he declined. The convention had to meet again and elect another. It did so, and he declined. It met again and elected another, and he declined. Again, and elected another, and he declined. The next one died before he had time to decline. And in all of this there was no attempt made to cut up the diocese, or blot it out of existence. It stood as the vacant charge of the venerated Bishop Lay, claiming the election of another Bishop.

Let us observe this uniformity in government by establishing fourteen districts, and it will always be known that we must have an equal number of Bishops, and that no election is to take place unless there be a vacancy in office, or that the extension of the work necessitated the organization of another district.

This will put an end to so much useless discussion concerning aspirations and elections. It will exalt the office more and be better for the Church in general.

## CHAPTER VIII

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THE MEANS OF PRESERVING THE EPISCOPAL  
COMPLEMENT.

**T**HIS is a proposition that should receive the full attention of the General Conference. The mind, perhaps, has never been turned towards it, and still it has been a subject effecting the advancement of the Church. It must now, though, be weighed and decided. A certain number of districts must be laid out and kept supplied with the required number of Bishops. We say fourteen; and so will say the General Conference, if it should see the advantage as we see it. Then it will make a provision by which it will keep up the full force of the board. There are two or three methods by which this might be done. By the first there could be a temporary arrangement and by the other two a permanent one.

First. The Board of Bishops could be directed to assemble three months after the *obit* of any member of it, and by due deliberation elect some well qualified elder to act as superintendent of the district until a Bishop should be elected. It could commission him to travel through the district, hold the annual conferences and do everything not forbidden by the law. He could be known simply as the District Superintendent, entitled to half the salary of a Bishop and to all his traveling expenses. He would have no right to the full salary of a Bishop, because he would not be a Bishop. He would be only a substitute to preserve the interests of the district until a Bishop could be elected to keep up the number. Such a proviso would be far better than the sledge-hammer one. It would be the means of keeping the work in order so that the General Conference might improve it and not have to reconstruct it. The Bishops themselves can see that this is a measure much more profitable than the one that orders them to assemble around a district with sledges, mauls and mallets to bang away until the pieces fly in every direction. They could appoint a superintendent, aid him and let him be a nominal Bishop, if you please, and thus preserve in an organic form that that has been made by the General Conference. This would be progression.

Second. The General Conference could be called to assemble in extra session six months after the demise of any Bishop

for the purpose of electing his successor. In this event the vacancy could be fully and permanently filled at once. It would promulgate the work without any interruption; and, moreover, indicate such a high regard for the episcopal office and the perpetuation of system that the whole Church would be moved to more fervently support its government. The extra expense would find a full liquidation in increased moral strength. People would then conceive that the managers of the Church were unreservedly concerned in working for its welfare. They would be better satisfied with the course pursued.

The law-making power would then be manifested over and above every other agency in the Church. It would show itself as acting upon the most reasonably justifiable ground. The death of a Bishop at any time ought to exercise the members of the Church as much as the death of a President does the people of the United States. Those of the clergy who have been elected and stand as members elected to the General Conference for four years, ought to be incited by law to be deeply concerned in filling the vacancy. This earnestness concerning a vacancy by death, ought to be evinced, not only in this case, but relative to a vacancy made by any other cause. It should not be left subjected to the question whether anybody should be elected at the next General Conference to fill it. The method of government ought to be so well devised, and the number of Bishops made so indispensable to the prosperity of the Church, that the standing decree would have to be, "A vacancy shall be filled as soon as possible."

Third. The Episcopal Committee could be made the most efficient branch of government in supplying this necessity. Soon after the obsequies of any one of the honored board, the chairman of said committee could convocate the members of it, at some suitable place, and have all the remaining Bishops present for the purpose of having an election and ordination to this holy office. This could be done in the event of a vacancy by any means.

The perpetuation of the full force of the requisite number—fourteen—is a matter of so much importance, that it should receive immediate consideration in the case of any vacancy. This can be done effectually by no other means so well as by the Episcopal Committee. Let it be commanded by such a strong, able man as the last chairman, Dr. Jas. A. Handy, and

be empowered by the General Conference to convene whenever there is a vacancy, that it may elect some one to fill it, and there will be no disorder of the work from the end of one quadrennium to another. The experience we have had in the passing period, tells us most emphatically that some remedy must be found for the benefit of the Church in this direction. A clear and well defined law formulated on this project, ought to be passed at the next General Conference. It is preposterous for any one to say that two or three Bishops can die, that two or three episcopal vacancies can be made, and that the work can go on just as well as it could before the deaths and vacancies. The logical deduction of this asseveration is, that it is either an absurdity, or that Bishops are no account. He who will, can take either horn of the dilemma. If it is absurd, then it is imperative that the full force should be kept in existence. If it is true, then it is well enough to let the whole board die out. Such are the conclusions from thoughtless declarations made concerning this important subject. Every one with common sense knows that six men cannot do fourteen men's work. They cannot do it. The work is seriously effected, therefore, whenever there is a lessening of the number. It has been but a few hours ago since I heard one complaint after another, in a certain section, because there had been no episcopal visits. These complaints are made, but it is not known, even in part, that the ground of them is caused by an insufficient number of Bishops to make the visits. What conception, then, can be formed of an extension of that ground by a gradual diminution of the number indispensable to the performance of the work by visiting every charge? None at all. The good people who are to be nursed and encouraged see what they presume to be culpable neglectfulness, and see an increase of it, but do not realize that on the death of every Bishop, whilst the work is growing with the age, burdens are imposed upon those who are left behind which they can accomplish in no better manner than could the children of Israel both make brick and gather straw. Then it is plain that every Bishop taken from an insufficient number detrimentally effects the work of all of them. Each one can do only a part of his own work and a part of somebody else's. More, then are needed.



## CHAPTER IX.

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## THE REGULATION OF THE EPISCOPAL DISTRICTS.

**T**HE division of the Church into episcopal districts is the best arrangement that can be made of it. It is far better than the rotary system, and ought to be sustained and improved from time to time. All the advantages of it have never been realized, because there have not been a sufficient number of Bishops to show them: and still the Church has gained more by it than it would have gained by the other system.

The brethren in by-gone days acted wisely when they adopted it; for they took a plan that is concurrent with the itinerancy. It at once, when properly adjusted, indicates the number of Bishops needed, and also facilitates the work before them.

This may be made more intelligible by coming right down to practical illustrations. We now have, at least, forty-two annual conferences which, for efficiency of administration, should be arranged in the following order:—

1st District.—Philadelphia, New York, New England and New Jersey Conferences.

2d District.—Baltimore, Virginia and North Carolina.

3d District.—Ohio, Indiana and Pittsburg.

4th District.—North Ohio, South Missouri and North Kansas.

5th District.—Illinois, Iowa and North Missouri.

6th District.—South Kansas, California and East Kentucky.

7th District.—East Tennessee, West Tennessee and West Kentucky.

8th District.—South Carolina, Columbia and North Georgia.

9th District.—South Georgia, South Alabama and North Alabama.

10th District.—West Florida, East Florida and South Mississippi.

11th District.—North Mississippi, North Arkansas and South Arkansas.

12th District.—Indian, South Louisiana and East Texas.

13th District.—West Texas, North Louisiana and Central Texas.

14th District.—North East Texas and Colorado.

We give this as a pertinent arrangement and a correct outlining of the whole field of labor; but concede four conferences to the First District, because of its prestige and seniority. It is thus left, though, to be an exceedingly heavy charge for any Bishop. The smallest one is not light, as may be seen by the number of square miles. All of them in the aggregate computed in this manner, show the immensity of the work. Two million, three hundred and twenty-four thousand, seven hundred and sixty-six (2,324,766) square miles of territory are to be traveled, from year to year, by the Episcopal superintendents to give life and prosperity to the Church. How cumbersome, indeed, then, and how awkward and impracticable must be the work in its present condition! An analysis of the subject now before us, will give a clear idea of it.

In the First District, according to this

regulation, we would have.....	152,266	square miles
In the Second.....	125,000	“ “
In the Third.....	119,300	“ “
In the Fourth.....	153,000	“ “
In the Fifth . . . . .	356,000	“ “
In the Sixth.....	419,000	“ “
In the Seventh.....	62,000	“ “
In the Eighth.....	58,000	“ “
In the Ninth.....	80,000	“ “
In the Tenth.....	82,000	“ “
In the Eleventh. . . . .	76,000	“ “
In the Twelfth.....	238,300	“ “
In the Thirteenth . . . . .	203,600	“ “
In the Fourteenth.. . . .	206,300	“ “

The districts put in this order, are very disproportional so far as the number of miles are concerned. The largest one has 419,000 miles, whilst the smallest has only 58,000 miles. This is a difficulty that cannot very well be remedied, but it is so far better than the existing arrangement, that it needs only a comparison to see the strength of the argument. If the districts could be equalized, so that each would embrace 166,054 square miles, as it would by a proper division, then there would be more uniformity in carrying on the work. Each Bishop would have his equal proportion of territory, so that there could be regularity in the return of all of them to headquarters. Each one enabled by this system to throw all his force into his specific duty, would do more in improving the Church in one

year than is done now in two. There could be a concentration of thought upon one particular part of the Church that would benefit the whole of it; for every Bishop could direct his energies for the accomplishment of that that would be feasible and so benefit the whole Church. All the parts would be put into a good condition and the whole would consequently experience the same result. This *desideratum*, though, cannot be realized by less than fourteen Bishops; for profitably there cannot be less than fourteen districts organized to live, but not to be destroyed. It is no begging of the question to say that a man of reason cannot fail to see that a strict and accurate regulation of the episcopal districts requires the attention of no less than fourteen Bishops. It is a matter so patent that it might convince the common masses. The necessity is so incontrovertible that it cannot be invalidated by any adverse argument based upon the attending amount of expense. He who will make a dime outweigh a virtue, has little regard for an angel's visit. It is only those who have not delved into the subject and understand little about the divine necessity who are all the time considering a Bishop in connection with a silver dollar, whilst the colored people are spending tens of thousands of dollars annually just for a trifling ride on a steamboat or a car.

The great Church work of the Almighty God presents itself in part to us by the A. M. E. organization and indicates its demands to be met to the greatest extent of constituent ability. Let it be done, then in the most faithful manner. Here we perceive hundreds and thousands and millions of miles to be traveled, not only by pastors and presiding elders, but by Bishops, to make the work, in the highest degree effective. The magnitude of the organization, the vastness of the area, the multiplicity of interested individuals, all combine to convince us that the episcopal force must be equal to the demand. This must be so for the purpose of cultivating and increasing respect for the episcopate, for the purpose of engendering a higher degree of appreciation for the connection, for the purpose of making the full ecclesiastical power of the colored people felt throughout this land and in different parts of the world. Let, then, the demands of this regulation be heeded, so that the lost ground by former methods may be regained, and those who scoff and sneer will be compelled to admit that the A. M. E. Church is ruled by sages

## CHAPTER X.

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## THE PROVISION TO BE MADE FOR THE OLDEST BISHOPS.

**W**E want more Bishops for one of the noblest of purposes : and that is to preserve and honor the sires who have done well in discharging their duties. Reverence to old age at all times is commendable. It was one of the lessons which were most earnestly taught the Lacedaemonian youths. They were taught to respect old men by saluting them, by giving way to them on the streets, by rising up to them in all companies and public assemblies. Lysander said, "Old age had no where so honorable an abode as in Sparta, and that it was an agreeable thing to grow old in that city." Those who are veterans in any beneficial service should be nursed and kept effective as long as this can be done by any means. An imposition of excessive duties upon them, the compulsion of them to bear heavier burdens than aged men should bear, is downright cruelty. An encouragement of their ambition to labor, as they did in the prime of life, is an absolute lack of sympathy. Good old men are always desirous of doing work beyond their power of endurance, and will go, sometimes, until they fall down in their tracks. To permit them or to encourage them to do this, is not an exhibition of brotherly love and kindness. Humanity requires better treatment of them in every respect. If it is by any means possible to pursue a course that will contribute to a prolongation of their lives, it is meet to pursue that course. The reverse of this results in something like a modified degree of manslaughter. The treatment of old men effects either their brevity or longevity. Care, then, should be always exercised in this direction.

Men who have grown gray in the Church, and have made their gray heads a crown of glory because they have walked in the ways of righteousness and ministered unto the saints, should be taken as subjects for the highest consideration. They should be preserved for their good, ripe counsel.

Everyone, if he has been faithful, fatherly and kind, should be revered when he reaches his three score years and ten. Bishops in a church who have reached this age and spent their days in honor, should have every provision made for their continued influence, happiness and comfort.

Their burdens should be lightened and their ease of mind increased. This cannot be done, though, whilst the business

affairs and spiritual duties of the Church are imposed upon such a limited number as are not able to bear them. One object to be kept in view, then, in increasing the episcopal force is to be the preservation of the senior Bishops. The work is to be so regulated and re-adjusted that they may be situated to feel relieved and not aggrieved. It is to be divided into just so many parts as will make it practicable for each Bishop to discharge his duty to the full extent of the law. Then those senior Bishops are to be fixed just where they ought to be for the purpose of sustaining their parental influence in their declining years. Coming as near to this point as we possibly can by giving three conferences to a district and regulating the number of square miles (for be it known that it is the number of square miles which should be considered and not the number of members); we can situate those Bishops so that they can be made conspicuous as the honored fathers of the Church and at the same time live with an increased episcopal influence for good. This can be done thus when it cannot be done by the "happy-go-lucky" sort of method that is observed at the present time. Let the old Bishops be kept near their base of operation and they will be better able to show more of their efficiency. By the way of illustration—

1. The General Conference should settle Bishop J. P. Campbell right down in the First Episcopal District. It should do this because he has his home in it, and his work would begin at home so that he would not have to waste his strength in traveling away from home to begin his work. Honored and beloved as he is in his home district, he would be able, by this situation, to do more minute work than he could do in any other field of labor. He would be able to travel by easy stages the different States forming his field of labor and keep himself fresh to administer at every point. This would be a great deal better than putting him to the necessity of traveling through Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina to reach his work in South Carolina. The case is so plain that it needs no extended argument. It would be a glowing tribute of respect, moreover, paid to the Bishop, aid given to his efficiency and credit cast upon the connection.

2. Bishop John M. Brown should be stationed in the Second Episcopal District. He could then proceed at once from his home in Washington to attend to his duties in the States adjacent to the District of Columbia, and thence to North Carolina,

Throwing all the energy, industry and zeal into those States that he now applies to different sections of the United States, he would be still more notable in the manifestation of his ministerial power. Such an appointment, keeping him confined to this circumscribed episcopal limit, would enable him to husband that strength which is expended in hard traveling that it might be infused into his preparation for spiritual service. He could surely by his talent, education and refinement in this wise do more for God and man, and have improvement in his health, although three States and three conferences would be a heavy tax upon him. Let all whom this may concern give it due deliberation.

3. Bishop Daniel A. Payne should be appointed to the Third Episcopal District. He lives at Wilberforce, and Wilberforce is in Ohio, a part of the Third District. Let him be settled down there where he could enjoy the comforts of his cozy cottage, and he would be better prepared to work for the intellectual as well as spiritual interests of his Church. He has at his home in this district a large accumulation of literary matter, an orderly arrangement of papers, books and pamphlets, which he could handle for the benefit of the world. The connection would be made to feel the greater force of his talents by the opportunity he would have to use the material at his command. He would be able to do more for this district than he could do for any other one in the connection. And not only this, but he could be delegated with power to do more than he could do elsewhere for the cause of education. The General Conference could make him Regent of Wilberforce University as well as Presiding Bishop of the Third District, and by such an act could enable him to do for the University that which would make both it and its President far more influential in their educational operations. This would be honoring him for the work that he has done in that institution as well as for that he has done in the whole connection. The advantages would be so great by this means that we may all well say—"It is a consummation devoutly to be wished." The good effects would be felt throughout the land and Bishop Payne would be duly nurtured in his old age. He in Ohio as Regent of Wilberforce and Presiding Bishop of the Third District, would be an increased power for the good of the connection.

Let these propositions be adopted and these veterans in the prelacy be in this wise relieved from arduous duties away from

their home districts, and they will be known as the peculiarly distinguished Bishops *emeriti* in every part of this land. They will be the topmost characters (if the work should be properly divided and an adequate number of Bishops elected) of an ecclesiastical system that would gain the admiration of all good people among generations yet unborn. The African Methodist Church would be made conspicuous for its exemplary recognition of service and its establishment of methods for good government. Amen! And so let it be.

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## CHAPTER XI.

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THE BUSINESS IDEAS NEEDED IN THE EPISCOPACY FOR THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF CHURCH WORK.

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**G**REAT institutions are moved by ideas. A host of men with brain force sparkling like a glittering constellation can turn every wheel of the highest organization. That bright conception of contrivances and of remedies for necessities, which puts in motion latent agencies for practical results, is the essential power underlying all organic existence. It impels, develops and establishes organized bodies for the general good of man. Words without ideas are like arrows without heads. Men of ideas start the wheels for human progress and supply the means for keeping them in motion. The interests of society depend upon them.

A great institution like the A. M. E. Church continually needs the application of vital force to drive it ahead in meeting its obligations. And, moreover, in proportion to its development it must be supplied with such accelerants as will meet its demands. Adulations of some great founder, clapping hands in the intensity of joy, productions of all the wealth of verbosity form no fulcrum for ascending nor basis for existence. Business ideas are needed in proportion to the advancing age.

The episcopacy of a church is as a grand observatory. It is the station at which, and in which, men must see, form conceptions, and devise plans "with malice toward none, and with charity for all" to promote every interest of the Church, both spiritual and temporal. It is the position in which men must be placed to see the difference between fossilized notions and timely ideas. The A. M. E. Church to-day, more so than at any

other period, needs qualified, grave, active business men added to those who are at the head of government. The harping upon any old worn-out plan of a past generation does not suit the present time and the connection suffers by a toleration of it. In every annual conference to day there are financial problems great and small, which demand the consideration and advice of Bishops who know something about financial matters. Economy and correct appropriation are topics to be considered by them and to be disposed of by them to the highest degree of advantage. To this end it requires men who know the value of a cent and the proper place for its application. And not only so, but men who will take time to ponder, as seriously as bankers do, every monetary question effecting the progress of the ministry and the Church. The need of such men and a goodly number of them, one of which certainly is the well-known Dr. James A. Handy, is manifest by the condition of every department of the Church and the sufferings of our faithful ministers. Confirmation of the fact is made by every project we may call up for testification. What advancement has been made in any fund for church extension? What amazing degree of prosperity has marked the cause of missions? What arrangement has been effected to inspire the Church by an influential publishing department?

Much more could have been done in those directions, if in connection with the business ideas already in the Board, there had been a number of them equal to the demand. The business energy and perseverance and clear conception of Dr. William H. Hunter, of the Virginia Conference, a man of exalted character and moral courage, added to the Episcopal Board, would have made the Church a stronger organization to day. If there had been all the force needed, and a concentration of mind upon well formed financial plans, there would be to-day a flourishing condition of the Metropolitan Church, a better support of the suffering preachers, and more facility for the extension of education. Let no one think that the mere qualification of a Bishop to preach a good sermon, cultivate popularity and do a great deal of traveling is the principal thing in the efficiency of his life. If such ever was the case, it is not the case at present.

The magnitude of the A. M. E. Church now is so great that its business features must have the strictest attention. The forming of corporations, the entering into contracts, the draw-



of deeds, the erection of buildings, the nature of liens and mortgages and various other kinds of transactions, are subjects which frequently require the advice of Bishops. Let them be men, then, able to give advice on these subjects, and eminent indeed will be their services to the Church. The temporal affairs by this means would be so regulated that great benefit would be experienced by every department of the Church. Business management would produce a surplusage of the collections brought into every conference and this could, from time to time, be turned into a fund to be kept in reserve for emergencies. The advanced business talents of the Board could then be concentrated upon the aggregates and be directed to the end of utilizing them for the good of the whole connection. Conference money is too frequently now regarded to be of but secondary importance. A few hours are spent upon subjects which should require days for consideration, and then appropriations are made without due comprehension of the applicability. There ought to be a remedy for this defect, because it is a matter that belongs to the public welfare. People make their contributions for the purpose of advancing ecclesiastical causes--missions, theological institutes, religious publications, etc., and so improvement in management ought to be made every year. Business capacity in the ordinary walks of life is increased according to necessity--brains, varied talents, experience and learning are added from time to time as business establishments grow, and by this means the growth is perpetuated for them to sustain the test of every competition. In strict keeping with this analogy, the A. M. E. Church is to have due attention paid to its business developments, and the business qualification of its episcopacy increased according to the spirit of the times. The demands for such a provision are urgent on every hand. There are many more projects than there were in former times, and the people are called upon to sustain them. In complying with this demand, they expect to see the good effects of their donations. They anticipate improvements of Church institutions and the relief of needy agents. To give them satisfaction in this direction their money must be managed in a judicious manner. The representative men of the Church in the episcopacy must have keen business eyes to see that that money is fittingly applied at the time, or economically preserved for the future. It is by this method, and this alone, that the temporal power of the Church can be so increased that it will be conducive to the promotion of spir-

itual interests. Let there be a fertility of business ideas in the Episcopal Board, according to present demands, and the force of them will be felt at Wilberforce, in Philadelphia, in every part of the land, in Africa and among the West India Islands. The A. M. E. Church will extend its proportions and become "more terrible than an army with banners."

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CHAPTER XII.

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THE ANIMATION CREATED IN CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS  
BY EPISCOPAL VISITS.

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**I**T is a good thing for a Bishop to uniformly go from place to place in his district. The title of his office is more impressive than that of any other preacher, and gains more respect, whether he be a man of great or small ability. People are generally inclined to esteem the office as pre-eminently sacred, and if some of them can do no more than term its occupant a "Bushup" they will signally show that they have a conception of the sanctity of the office. They will evince this by the manner in which they honor the occupant in word and deed. His station will be and is regarded to be as the medium by which the Church represents all the meritoriousness of the ministry,—truth, honesty, gravity, grace, love and wisdom. A Bishop fortified with such ingratiatory characteristics of an office can go forth qualified to do more than any ordinary man. People wait to receive him.

What, then, are the effects produced by his visits? He does not go into his brethren's various charges without having his services to be as "bread cast upon the waters." Here and there he will find weak and sluggish societies. He will find the members careless, stewards inefficient, trustees indifferent and Sabbath school scholars inattentive. Something must be done to arouse them. Something can be done to arouse them. He can do it. Let a set of people be found in this indifferent state, and it will be seen that there is efficacy in the services of a good Bishop. The announcement of a prospective visit from him will quickly cause the lethargic members to get up and rub their eyes, that they may see what is best for them to do by the way of making decent preparation for his reception. Two or three episcopal visits will stir them up to duty, and

bring them together, and incite them to take steps to increase their strength that they may make some kind of respectful appearance as a church organization. Episcopal visits will produce these effects when nothing else will do it. Tough, indeed, must be the crowd that remains unsusceptible to this instrumentality. They must be worse than toads which refuse to move under the genial rays of the vernal sun; worse than turtles standing still under the excoriating temperature of a red hot iron. A Bishop's visits arouse careless members, ameliorate the condition of inefficient stewards, bestir indifferent trustees, draw inattentive Sabbath school scholars and create a lively degree of interest in a part of every community. And still there is a set of "penny-wise and pound-foolish" fellows who are everlastingly cursing the columns of the *Recorder* and abating the ardor of the Church, by carping over the necessary expenditures to keep the Church alive and make it a moving, godly power. Well would it be if the Church should so fix them that it might say, They have—

"No, not a tooth or nail to scratch,  
And at my actions carp and catch."

Let one speak of the necessity of electing more Bishops and they will, in opposition, speak of their notion of abolishing the presiding eldership, advancing hereby the unsavory theory springing from ignorance, that if we have more Bishops we do not want presiding elders. Truly a little learning is a dangerous thing. I believe in a full and extensive Methodist government, which gives such fruits as are indicated by the uncompromising Kershaw. Having now made this digression, I come back to my line of argument to show that episcopal visits are often the means of buoying up discouraged pastors.

When a minister in charge has done all he can and still the people will lie as dead weights upon his hands, episcopal relief is to him a heavenly blessing. When a kind, paternal Bishop comes along, it gives him an inspiration that makes his work more effective. Hundreds know this to be true and that such aid is all the time needed from this source. We sometimes hear preachers sighing from the very depths of their souls for a Bishop—for a visit from a Bishop. They admit that a visit from such a dignitary would promote their ministerial spirit as could be done by no other cause if they could secure that visit just at a certain time. But what prevents them from being successful at this point? Why, the

number of Bishops is so limited and they have so much to do that it is impossible for them in scores of cases to go to the relief of such brethren, no matter how great may be their discouragement. They must be left to dwell in their dispirited condition, to communicate their gloomy feelings unto those around them, to experience more damaging results in the end. Even a single case of this kind is sufficient to cause any amount of reasonable regret, and this is intensified by bringing it into contrast with that one that has been subjected to the magnetic influence that extends through the pastor to the organization. Here we perceive the ministerial affinity that exists throughout all grades, Bishops, presiding elders and pastors.

More remote still is this peculiar influence. It goes beyond even the bounds of the Church and affects those who are outside of it. There are many people who attend services at the A. M. E. Churches who are still unconscious of the magnitude of the Connection. They see the pastor at his regular routine of duties, and sometimes they see a Presiding Elder, and sometimes only the pretension of one, going his rounds, and this is the sum and substance of all the connectional power manifested to them from year to year. In the face of this they have a measured degree of interest in the Church. Episcopal visits, though, paid to the Church cause them to increase this interest and to become deeply concerned in its welfare. They grow animated on the anticipation of the event and join in with the members as they do on no other occasion to make it beneficial to the Church. This is true concerning friends, both white and colored. The inference is clear, then, that in proportion to the extension of episcopal visits will be the increase of attachment of persons outside of the Church. This attainment, it is well known, is experienced wherever the visits are made.

A failure to make provision for the accomplishment of work to this extent would be nothing less than a calamity. The animation of weak and sluggish societies, of discouraged pastors and outside elements by the itineration of an adequate number of Bishops, is as pertinent an argument as can be applied unto the case. Let us have more Bishops, making the presiding eldership still more effective, and God will bless the Church.

## CHAPTER XIII.

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## THE NECESSITY OF HAVING BISHOPS ON EXTRA OCCASIONS.

**E**VERY preacher knows the merit of the subject now under consideration. It is one of the most important links forming the argument that the welfare and accelerated progress of the A. M. E. Church, in the future, depend upon the wisdom to be displayed in the next General Conference in establishing an Episcopal Board that shall embrace, in all respects, an adequate amount of numerical strength. He who will bend his own stubborn notions to the Divine Power guiding the writer's hand and thoughts, will be able to see and will concede the force of this to the full extent. The bearing of this subject upon the case cannot be gainsaid by anyone who is disposed to bow to reason.

The success of extra religious projects often depend upon the presence of a Bishop, and one is often needed on such occasions. Whenever a corner-stone is to be laid, although elders can do it as well as a Bishop, it is far better and far more profitable to have the presence of a Bishop, that he may carry on services and more impressively represent the character of the Connection. The Catholics make a great display on such occasions, and have their big men, because they know that it is an auspicious time for the future good of the denomination. They know that by flourishing trumpets and commanding episcopal aid, they can advance the interests of the Church.

One Bishop at the laying of every corner-stone can make a greater impression than any other official in the order of the clergy. Hence, it would be well in the A. M. E. Church to have it so that whenever a corner stone was to be laid for an edifice, great or small, a Bishop could be present to perform the ceremonies and say, "In the name of the Triune God, the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, we lay this stone for a foundation of a house of worship to be consecrated to his service." Let provision be made that one can at any time and in every place be at such a ceremony, and it will, in the course of years be seen that the benefits derived from this little source alone greatly outweigh the objections interposed by skinflints who wrap up their talents in a napkin, tie up their pockets and obstruct the word of grace.

It does frequently happen that ministers are perplexed in making their arrangements for church dedications, because the number of Bishops is so very small that they can hardly catch one as he comes out of the woods. Sometimes the services have to be carried on without such a dignitary; and whenever this is done, it is done measurably to the detriment of the Connection; for many will be disappointed by the absence of a Bishop. This is an occasion so memorable that no defect should be in the arrangement made for it. There should be no postponement or substitution because of the impossibility of securing the attendance of a Bishop.

The dedication of a church is a great event and whatever can be done to make it memorable ought to be done without any reservation. There should at all times be a sufficient number of Bishops to meet this demand, so that some one might go to any place and dedicate any edifice, no matter how humble might be its dimensions. In every instance the trustees, stewards and leaders should meet, receive and welcome a *Bishop* at the door to give *him* in God's name, the keys of the church as a token that they will forever "submit to the Discipline, doctrine and government of the African Methodist Episcopal Church—and will forever afterward permit the ministers and preachers of said church to preach God's Holy Word in said edifice."

The effects of such a substantial, unfaltering arrangement would be observed in a growth of finances, an increase of members, an attraction of friends, a promotion of good government, an intensification of respect for the episcopal order and a higher conception of African Methodism. The most important period in the history of a church edifice is the time of its dedication. People of all classes look to it as a time to be remembered. They anticipate a grand programme and the attendance of shining lights in the clerical circle. At no time, then, should they experience disappointment. Every provision that can be made should be made to meet their anticipation on such an occasion.

Being induced once more to allude to the Catholics we find that Sunday, September 11th of this year, they dedicated St. Ambrose Church at Cresaptown, Md. This edifice, although situated in a small town, became the subject for the attention not only of a Bishop, but of the Cardinal himself. He went there and preached the dedicatory sermon himself.

In doing this, policy was manifest and profit the consequence. Similar causes produce like results. Evidently, then, when Protestantism is straining every nerve to check the dangerous progress of Catholicism, the A. M. E. Church should have a full force of its highest order of ministers to meet every demand on dedicatory occasions, and to meet their counteracting influence. Whenever a call is made there should be a Bishop to go promptly, whether it should be to dedicate a grand temple in a metropolis or a little frame building down at T. B., or near Hole-in-the-Wall. He should go and proclaim the power of his Connection. His presence is needed.

And this is often found to be true concerning extraordinary appointments for the purpose of liquidating church debts. People sometimes become very indifferent because of their heavy obligations and frequent efforts for extrication. The pastor then in his perplexity is compelled to make an uncommon exertion to arouse them to a sense of duty. He must go to work on a subscription list and plans for a big meeting: and then at the stated time he must have those who will be the most potential to assist him. Prominent men of his own class will be of great service to him: but none of such great service as one whom he could call a Prelate. Hence, he makes all his arrangements with the intent of having such an eminent official at his hand. And then when everything is complete he looks for one. Just as lustily as Richard cried out, "A horse! a horse! My kingdom for a horse!" so does he feel like crying out, "A Bishop! a Bishop! My pastorate for a Bishop!" He knows the advantage to be gained by such a prominent acquisition and how much is to be lost by attending failure. He is therefore worked up to the highest degree of anxiety and does the best to get a Bishop to assist him. The church needs such assistance. If, then, the Connection would make ample provision to meet the wants of embarrassed charges, it should give a sufficient number of Bishops, settled in well established districts, to go in such emergencies and pay their own traveling expenses, if need be, to arouse the people to make a gigantic effort for their own deliverance. By this means the whole Connection would be made more prosperous. It would gain at least ten per cent. more of advantage than it has gained by the crude, circumscribed course it has been pursuing for lo! a great number of years. Many people disinclined to give would be incited to give by the mere appearance

of a Bishop. Hundreds would arise and respond to the call of a pastor when otherwise they would remain indifferent. Is it not clear, then, that the "necessity of having Bishops on extra occasions"—to lay corner-stones, to dedicate churches, to aid at special services for the liquidation of heavy debts—is a subject grave in its bearing upon the reason for a full election and well prescribed districts? If it can be truthfully said that a Bishop is of no more service than any other preacher on such occasions, then the argument comes to naught. But the converse being true, unreservedly it may be asserted that the majesty of his office now stands forth more efficacious on all such occasions than that of any ordinary son of thunder. Delegates, the voice of God regard.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

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### THE CONNECTIONAL STRENGTH MANIFESTED BY AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF BISHOPS.

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**I**N olden times it was common in the itinerancy to have many charges and few laborers. Circuits were burdened down with so many churches, that none of them could get full attention. Exhausted preachers would be compelled to travel from point to point and do but little in building up any of them, because of the extensiveness of the work. This condition of things prevailed because the Church was poor, the people were poor. They were not able, oftentimes, to supply the preachers with any other kind of repast but fitch, corn-bread and pumpkin mush. In the course of time, though, the membership increased, the Church grew stronger and there was a division of the area of circuits and an increased number of itinerants to represent their strength. Once the general superintendency of the A. M. E. Church had to be served by two Bishops, because it was too weak to have a larger number; but as time advanced and strength developed, it had additions to its number. As the Church thus moved on it showed itself worthy of respect and secured it. At every stage of its progress an adaptation of its machinery has extended its influence. And so it has gone on, until to-day it exists as a great power that claims for itself treatment that shall go far beyond fogyism or puerility. No cloudy conception, no superficial



conclusion, no ill-begotten prejudice must for one moment come athwart the deliberation that it demands for its present necessities. It must be clearly seen that the A. M. E. Church of the present is different from that of 1864. It has grown on during the past generation until it has attained proportions which must be brought to bear directly upon the masses of mankind. How can this be done? By setting apart a less number of Bishops than that needed for the purpose? Can it be done by turning them out of their districts to roam the plains like antelopes? No. The Connection's strength is to be made manifest if every member in it has to pay a dollar for this purpose.

It is said that there are so many hundreds of thousands of them composing the great organization and possessing ability for Church government. This assumption can be made good by the sustenance of a full force of leaders to carry on all the general work. It can be shown then to a certainty that there is a power behind them to keep them in the performance of their duty to give evidence that the claim of numerical strength is a living reality and not a myth. Individually or collectively, the members of the Episcopal Board would stand as the representatives of the recorded thousands of communicants forming the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Even the salaries paid to these officials would be effective in proclaiming its character. The world at large would conclude that an organization sustaining such an efficient branch of service was worthy of the highest degree of respect. Everywhere the strength of numbers would be represented and by this means made to grow. People love to join in with the crowd and they would be induced to do it.

And, still further, the A. M. E. Church has justly claimed to have within its borders a vast amount of intellect and learning. It is presumed that there is no other organization like it among all the millions of the colored population. Perhaps this is true; but whether it be so or not, it is beyond controversy that the general intellectual and literary character of the organization demands its highest order of representation. There are so many eyes directed towards it from every cardinal point that wisdom dictates the necessity of having the most ample arrangement made to most satisfactorily meet them. Astute people always want to see what kind of a representation can be made by any notable institution. They are anxious to ascertain what amount of brain and culture lies back of all pro-

fession. If they perceive meagreness in management or a limitation of the required number of leading agents, they conclude that there is a lack of mental ability in the combination. But if they see an arrangement that is suitable for every exigency, they conclude that intellect and learning predominate in the methods of government. Everyone knows that an imposing Board of Bishops would be of the highest degree of benefit to the intellectual and literary character of the Connection. People by this means would be enabled to form an idea of the intellectual power directing the connectional affairs. Every man of the Board, by his own brains, would be a criterion for his constituents. A Bishop's dignity and ability make their favorable impressions whithersoever he wends his way. These signal effects produced are always to the advantage of the Church. They turn the attention to its educational enterprises, its teachers and accomplishments. That which has been done in this direction, by one distinguished man alone—D. A. Payne—is a confirmation of the averment without any additional proof. Take this, then, as the reason for the establishment of a full force, and the matter will be settled without any further controversy to the attainment of proportionably good results. The various departments and agencies, created for the promotion of knowledge, will hereby be set forth in the most favorable light.

All ranks of the ministry, moreover, will be prominently presented to the world. An episcopal force, judiciously distributed all over the land, would indicate that a subordinate body of ministers were in co-operation as promoters of one common cause. There would be a uniformity in clerical representation that would have a bearing in every direction. A Bishop everywhere would be seen and recognized as the head and front of an active band of preachers. It would be decided by those ignorant of the character of the Connection that organization, discipline, life and efficiency existed as the vigorous elements of the clerical force behind him. Every preacher of experience knows that many respectable people outside of the A. M. E. Church form their estimate of its condition by the appearance of a Bishop. They see through him the various attributes belonging to a religious body and accordingly form their favorable opinion of it.

Taking this method of representation, then, in its general sense, we observe that it effectually presents the whole power

of the Connection. A strong, imposing Board of Bishops, at any time, makes a more profound impression than one that is weak by inadequacy of numbers. A force equal to the demand of the Church in every part of the land would show the moral, intellectual, financial and personal strength of it to sustain that force in all its operations. Strength would manifest strength; and manifested strength would beget strength. And so the A. M. E. Church would grow in the course of years until its influence would far exceed that of any other religious people. Its departments, and plans, and ministers, and members; its societies, church edifices, schools and colleges; its religious meetings, conventional assemblies and social gatherings would all be presented to the world in one grand and glorious flood of light, that would sweep down every obstacle intercepting its onward march to divine accomplishments.

So great would be its character as a part of the militant Church, that the shades of departed spirits—such as Allen, Dunn and Waters; and the lustre of the heavenly hosts—such as fell upon Bethlehem's watching shepherds—would attend it in its onward progress in the work of reformation and regeneration. The Bishops confirmed would move like white-plumed marshals; the ministers, to subordinate ranks ordained, would fall in line like faithful orderlies; the communicants, sanctified to the holy roster, would mark time like true born veterans; and in this manner would the A. M. E. Church go on from conquest to conquest, whilst little penny-wise philosophers would stand amazed and say, "Du tell! I didn't think that it could be so."

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## CHAPTER XV.

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### THE PROSELYTES MADE TO AFRICAN METHODISM BY THE INFLUENCE OF A FULL EPISCOPAL BOARD.

**T**HE A. M. E. Church started in the face of strong opposition. It had its white enemies and its black enemies. Every inch of ground was gained by fighting all along the way. Ability, pluck and perseverance had to be shown to get the mastery over tremendous odds. Step by step it went, proving its qualification to "hold fast to that which is good," and so on gradually added reinforcements to its numbers.

The highways were cast up, the crooked paths were made straight, its progress was expedited and successful organization secured. It pressed its way onward and adopted instrumentalities for its growth. It has now reached an age and size which requires it to endorse the best of means for its prosperity and perpetuation. This is the time in which it should do its most glorious work. Sneering cavillers, listen! I say this is the time in which the A. M. E. Church should do its most glorious work. It should now adopt any measure that would be instrumental in making converts to its service. It should have a standing board of fourteen Bishops to convince the world that it is a strong religious motive power.

Let the attentive multitude of this nation see our organization in the fullness of its majesty and they will more readily be converted to it. The mistaken idea of increasing offices for emolument does no good; but the exhibition of strength by a great Episcopal Board is the project that will produce the effect. Bishops enumerated to go all over the land in a dignified manner as gentlemen as well as preachers, showing common sense, and learning, and religion, and all the qualities becoming to the episcopal office, would make more proselytes to the Church in one year than ever can be made by the small number now on hand. People of all classes, who pay but slight attention now to the Church, would be drawn by the influence exerted over them to give it a consideration; and then perceiving its represented power, would be induced to respect it. Many of those who have no confidence in the ability of colored people for self-government, would have such a striking evidence of it given here in prosperous church matters, that they would change their minds. It would be impossible for them to resist the impression made by the forces operating on them. They would at once concede that ecclesiastical government at least was a success, and then they would be inclined to more heartily sustain it, because it was a success. They would become its advocates and defenders.

Then, again, there are those who take a greater interest in other churches because they regard them as more powerful than the A. M. E. Church. Let, though, the wisdom of the General Conference create a full force of ecclesiarchs and a reaction will be the consequence. Persons entertaining this opinion will be wrought upon to realize that the A. M. E. Church is one of the most important organizations in the

world; and soon it would be seen that their pleasure would be in clinging to it. A great movement produces great results. As costly a project as has been the imposing Metropolitan Church of the Connection, no other undertaking has done so much in proclaiming the power of the Connection and in securing adherents to it. Let folks say what they may, magnanimity will compel them to declare that a debt of gratitude is owed Dr. J. W. Stevenson for his determination and perseverance in clearing the way and laying the foundation for such a magnificent superstructure. It makes proselytes from day to day, and shows them the magnitude of the Connection that sustains it. Like grand results will be produced by the establishment of a bench of fourteen Bishops. Individually and collectively they will work upon the minds of outside subjects, and cause them to see the true merit of the Church.

Impressions, furthermore, will be made upon those who look upon the A. M. E. Church as an ignorant, incompetent organization. Their misconception will be made so evident that they will admit it and view the organization in a different light. They will be forced to acknowledge that there is a predominancy of intellect, learning, experience and clerical resources which would reflect credit upon any ecclesiastical body. And now, I ask, is not this sufficient alone, in the name of all common sense, to justify the institution of such an invaluable project? It is a great thing to gain the favorable consideration of any one class of people. Ecclesiastical government is designed to exert a favorable influence over every body. Bishops are ordained for the purpose of making their particular organizations more influential among all parties. If, then, in proportion to the demand, their number be increased, the more and more extensive will be their influence by gravity, grace, refinement, liberality and kindness. Impressions will be made upon other church organizations as well as upon individuals and classes of individuals. Denominational prejudice will be more effectually broken down and fraternal relationship more tenaciously brought into existence. People will respect power when it is exercised in a righteous manner. Seeing it wielded by a grand bench of African Methodist Bishops for the glory and honor of God, they, in the form of church organizations will render obeisance to it and the constituency represented by it. The contempt which may have been nurtured by reason of a more contracted number will be

extinguished by the impressiveness of greater expansion. Even the Roman Church, that looks down with so much disdain upon Protestant societies, would be converted to the idea by the strong designated Episcopal Board that colored people are up and awake to the necessity of the times. Everywhere the process of conversion, in some one form or another, would be observed contributing in various degrees to the benefit of the A. M. E. Church. Hosts of interested ones would be transformed into ardent friends and become pleased with the doctrines, the ministry, the forms of worship, the congregations, the methods of government and all the several departments. Inside and outside of the "household of faith," the Connection would grow in favor. The circumcised would pray for it and the uncircumcised would commend it. Episcopal footprints made in every part of the land, as they cannot be made now by the very small number of incumbents, nor could be made by even a dozen, would be as guiding marks to the true character of the great Connection. They would be observed and respected by even the Protestant Episcopal Church that has ridiculed some of the best labors of the African Methodist Church and likened the religion of the people obtained thereby to "hot mutton gravy poured upon a cold plate." Let wisdom rule the hour and this grand provision be made for these glorious results and blest will be the coming generation.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

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### THE TEMPORAL ADVANTAGE TO BE GAINED BY THE OPERATIONS OF A BOARD OF FOURTEEN BISHOPS.

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**S** we near the end of our discussion the most important features present themselves for practical consideration. The great question to be noticed now is: "What is to be gained by electing so many more Bishops?" Some who have only superficially looked at the matter, think it would only be an additional expense. Some preachers—the very men who should be ready at a moment's suggestion to strengthen every grade of their order—are the very ones to be the most conspicuous leaders in their inconsiderate opposition. They seem not to realize the fact that the stronger you make the clerical ranks the better the chances for the subjugation of the world.

There are those who, knowing nothing of a consecutive argument and its concomitant illustrations, are always ready to stick two ten cent pieces in their glass-frames to look through them at the gravest ecclesiastical subjects, to come to such a conclusion as an opaque ten cent lens will bring them. I am not writing to make a show or to gain eclat, but for the glory of God to advance the interests of the A. M. E. Church. I know that the ideas and plans are practical, and that in carrying them out there is an advantage on every hand seen by everybody except those who are PAST MERIDIAN. The temporal advantages to be gained are as conspicuous as a field of corn.

Congregations would be increased in every direction. Access would be gained to more people of every class—to both colored people and white people. This would be done to an extent of at least thirty-five per cent. This calculation is accurate, moderate and reasonable. It may be applied to every place within the range of episcopal influence. This would be the leading step for the promotion of temporal economy. Make the Bishops, and you get the people: get the people and—well, what? Get the people and you have the means of increasing the finances of the Church. Those who should be drawn would be inclined to give liberally, because of the provision made to give them satisfaction. The extra benefit derived from them alone would far over-balance any additional expense. It would go to the extent of at least twenty per cent; and this would bring out the following probable result: In one conference of sixty appointments we would have an increase of \$1,200; and in the district complete \$3,600. By taking this calculation throughout the whole work as the general result of eight more Bishops, we would have \$28,800; this, over and above their salaries, would give us a surplus of \$12,800. Be it understood, though, that this calculation applies to only the current receipts and not to the general income by the dollar apportionment. Much greater indeed would be the advantage in this part of the case.

Fourteen Bishops (and, by the way, a learned brother said to us a few days ago—"If I could have my say I would make forty"), fourteen Bishops traveling over the land, seeing to all the temporal, as well as spiritual affairs of the Church, would infuse so much life into the people, that the Church treasury would realize twenty per cent. more of the dollar collection.

than it does now. Putting this upon the minimum basis of our previous calculation this would annually bring to the treasury \$50,000 more than it receives to-day. This fact, in the argument, is as plain to the mathematical thinkers of the Church as a simple lesson in a spelling book. But to those who know merely how to read and write, it is as a gem in the mud. Hard working ministers know that a great many people refuse to pay their dollar, for the reason, they say, that they never see a Bishop. Satisfy their desire then in this direction, and it is evident that you make up the deficiency. If we make provision to draw the people nearer to the Church, we can work upon their better feeling and lead them to the accomplishment of greater results. This is the only sure step by which we can make financial progress. It would bring \$50,000 more into the Church treasury just as certainly as day succeeds night; and this would be regarded as only a small sum in the proportional calculation. Two hundred thousand members with their multitude of attendants, ought to annually put \$200,000 into the Church treasury; and would do it, if business principles in the Church government were permitted to prevail and concession were made to the aphorism of Bishop Payne—that “wise men learn by reasoning.” The idea is in nowise extravagant; the plan by no means infeasible.

The Presbyterian Church is proposing to raise \$1,000,000 over its current expenses for the Church and ministry in connection with the General Assembly. Is it not reasonable in the highest sense for us to conclude by the establishment of the productive cause the infallible result for the A. M. E. Church would be one-twentieth of this amount every year? The cause will bring it, but without the cause, it never can be obtained.

The Connection at this time needs a fund for Church Extension. This important matter lies as a still-born baby at its feet, and why? No practical preconception has been formed and persistently carried on to its logical result. For more than twenty years in the itinerancy have I heard brethren talk of Church Extension; and to-day there are some who know as little about it as some of the people in the days of Paul knew about the Holy Ghost. Of a truth they can say, “We have not so much as heard whether there be any”—Church Extension. Soon, though, they would be made to know all about it by the operations of a full, efficient Episcopal Board. Money



would be accumulated and turned into a substantial fund that would contribute more to the expansion of the Connection than has been done by anything during the present generation. When one thinks that the Connection, old as it is and powerful as it is, has no fund for Church Extension and that some are in the dark concerning it, he is almost startled to cry out,—“Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph!”

In the course of one year, by the efficiency of such a Board, the Connection would be prepared to make a movement in unoccupied territory to build a church and give it a congregation that it might be a part and parcel of the great Connection, refund the money and assist in building other churches. Going on from this beginning soon the Church Extension Department would become a fixed institution, more important than any other department in the Church. Its funds would increase by the extra amount of the dollar apportionment secured by an adequate Board of Bishops and by special collections for the purpose. Then indeed would a secretary of the Church Extension Department be needed in lieu of some several other secretaries now in existence. The grand old Methodist Episcopal Church has paid due attention to this subject, and boasts that she builds a meeting house for every day in the year. If the A. M. E. Church, in proportion to its numbers, can come in any sense creditably near the accomplishment of this object by the election of this given number of Bishops, it alone will justify the election. Then let the delegates—lay and ministerial—give due consideration to the matter.

#### STRAY SHOTS.

Some time ago, I saw represented an incident of two colored fellows engaged in an argument. One, by the way of illustration, said: “Now, suppose you should lend Sam Jones fifty cents”—

The other immediately replied, “Nawr sar! Nawr sar! Lend him nuffin.”

The first again said, “Yes, but hold on, I say suppose”—

The second immediately again replied, “Nawr sar! Suppose nuffin. If I'd lend Sam Jones fifty cents, never get it in de world.”

During the course of our articles we brought up an illustration and proved a point by the act of the United States govern-

ment in retiring its generals at a certain age. In doing this, I was talking to logicians; others, of course did not understand it.

So far as the 360 societies in a district are concerned, every person who understands reasoning clearly sees that if a Bishop, according to law, cannot attend to them by having three conferences, he should by no means have any more than three conferences. He who does not understand an argument, and yet is opposed to it, only makes it stronger by attempting to meddle with it. "Yea, even so, saith the spirit."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

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### THE POWER A BOARD OF FOURTEEN BISHOPS WOULD WIELD OVER THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

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**T**HE Church needs just as many Bishops as will wholesomely effect all of its conditions, assemblies and departments. In an imposing Board there is a concentration of morals, intellect, learning, experience, loyalty and religion, which give it pre-eminency of influence on all important occasions. Such a body of men demands respect and gets it. On certain occasions there are times when a full force, when numerical strength is needed to make a deep impression; times when all the power of the episcopacy is required to sustain the majesty of the Church. A weight of numbers is worthy of consideration in this connection. It has direct bearing upon the General Conference. Such a Board can do more in the regulation of this law-making body than can be done by a smaller one. Each Bishop would have a better chance to train the brethren of his district—I say district—to do the legislative work before them.

The persuasive influence, moreover, of the extended Board would produce a greater effect upon the General Conference proceedings. It would make them more reasonable in their character. When the excitement would become very intense, the number of Bishops specified would have greater power to control it than would be invested in a smaller number of Bishops. Nearly all persons have respect for an imposing body, and so would the members of the General Conference in the moments of their excitement. They would not be so

likely to disregard the united voices of this number as they would that of two or three.

Fourteen grave men rising in the moments of excitement and confusion to hold up the hands of the presiding officer, would, by the majesty of their position, produce a salutary effect.

In council, by the knowledge obtained of the Church work in detail, they could do, and would do, far more in the management of the General Conference than is done by the present limitation of numbers. They could get nearer to the hearts of all the members and thereby exert a persuasive influence that would in exciting times bring calmness and deliberation. Such a result as this, would make one of the strongest reasons by the way of justification.

Every man of General Conference experience knows that there are certain periods during the session, when the mind inflamed runs counter to all law and order, and every effort, for the time being, to make a modification is unavailing. The power on the platform is excited to the utmost extreme, but is not equal to the occasion. Now, it can either be made equal, or it cannot be made equal. If it can, then it should be done; and the advocacy of such a course is by no means a fallacy in the estimation of any just thinker. Fourteen men of equal ability can at any time do more than seven of the same number. They, as Bishops, could and would exert a greater influence as presiding officers of the sessions of the General Conference, than is done now by the present number. They could, in every emergency, put their heads together and control refractory spirits.

Their united efforts, moreover directed at convenient seasons for the purpose of getting the good graces of the members, individually, would increase the respect collectively and make more effective the power of the chair. And not only so, but their minute work, in detail, in the course of four years would make an impression that would be signally realized upon the platform in general session. Is this fallacy or is it a logical sequence? Would we not just as naturally experience this good result as the seed-corn in the ground feels the effects of the gentle showers of rain? Let an episcopal force, equal to the demands of the Connection in all respects, be firmly established and it is certain that its influence will be felt in the General Conference whenever it is in session.

It will, moreover, beneficially effect the work of legislation. The views of Bishops do have a bearing in this direction, and it must be conceded that whenever they are numerically strong enough to thoroughly superintend the Connection, they will be able to give the most valuable opinions concerning all the particulars of legislation and government. They will in this manner be able to modify wild theories and check unprofitable conclusions. Their serious study of all subjects, from year to year, will be accepted as worthy of mature consideration. Their knowledge will have its weight. The deliberation of the body, consequently, will be made more practicable and profound. Concentrate as much ability as can be concentrated in the presiding agency and you thereby highly improve those who are subject to it. By this means our General Conference proceedings can be advanced to the highest degree of admiration. The controlling hand of the episcopacy will coolly, calmly and surely guide them to the very best end. The members of the conference will be instructed and convinced in all their deliberations so that they will be able to give good and substantial laws. The effects of such a power will go from every session to the uttermost borders of the Church.

A general superintendency accurately and judiciously applied to every annual conference district would be the means of acquiring an amount of experience and information that would be invaluable in qualifying the presiding officers to produce these great results.

Bishops more extensively associating themselves with brethren would thereby become better acquainted with them. This would give them more power to control them as delegates in General Conference assembled. By this means efficacy would be given to moral suasion, so that the Bishops, as presiding officers, would be able to bring order out of temporary confusion and not be compelled to turn to their *dernier ressort*. I hold that an inadequate number of them, be they men never so good, cannot accomplish this object even though they may make the most laudable exertions. If, then, fourteen, by the grace of God, can prove efficient in this direction; grand, great and glorious indeed will be the advantages, gained for the general interests of the Church. Power to control a General Conference session is not the least among the subjects which must be considered in this line of argument. Still, those who know nothing about the matter may say, "Tut, tut, tut!"

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These dignitaries—the old ones and the additional ones—working as only such a number of them could work, would make themselves so influential as the presiding officers of the General Conference, that the glances of their eyes, the words of their mouths and the motions of their hands would be more effectual than a cart-load of gavels and the maces of many marshals.

Business would then be carried on in a uniform manner and finished in a shorter time. Participants in, and observers of, the proceedings would all be better pleased with the conclusion of them. Better laws would be made and the Church would be stronger in every respect. All of its branches would be made to flourish like a green bay tree. Other denominations would be drawn into closer alliance and a warmer fraternal feeling would be made manifest on every hand. The Episcopal Board would become more admirable because of its efficiency and gain more assistance in the prosecution of its missionary work in distant parts of the world. It would be instrumental in having a culmination of all that is good in every General Conference session and in proving the true merit of the Church.

#### STRAY SHOTS.

“Glittering generalities” is a very fine and high-sounding phrase. It is so marked in its alliteration. It sounds so nice; but it has no application at all to my argument. It is an old worn-out expression of the Southerners, who used to direct it against the logical speeches of the abolitionists. Its sound, though, in such a connection was much better than its meaning. The same is true of it to-day in a similar attempt to use it. Let it die.

It is so hard sometimes to get some people to understand the difference between a brick and a stone. A colporteur, it is said, once visited an old woman, in her windowless hut, and talked to her about the death of the Saviour, and when she wanted to know if he was dead and the reply was made unto her, “Ah, my sister! I see that you are still in the dark,” she immediately answered, “Yes, law me. I have been after John for some time to knock a hole in that wall.” And so we just have to smile and let the matter go.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

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THE CONDITION OF AFFAIRS PECULIAR TO THE COLORED  
PEOPLE OF AMERICA THAT MAKES IT NECESSARY  
FOR THIS AMPLE FORCE OF BISHOPS.

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**T**HE condition of colored people in America, as every one knows, is altogether different from that of white people. It is, in many respects, the result of oppression running through centuries. In the course of this time white people have regarded colored people as unworthy of their association. They, or a great mass of them, have looked upon colored people as brutes, or as valuable beasts of burden; have debarred them from every edifying agency beyond the preaching of their selected scripture—"Servants, be obedient to your masters"—and left them where only brutalizing oppressors could leave them. Having even deprived them of gospel light, and hardened them against the Ten Commandments, they have done all they could to degrade them. And then, in the face of all this, a Rev. Mr. R. A. Goodwin, of the Divinity School of Petersburg, Va., turns his cheek into the hardness of Appolyon's, and reads a paper before an Alliance, at Alexandria, Va., and says: "There are, at least, seven millions of negroes in the United States that cannot under any true definition of Christianity be called Christians." He makes his ungodly onslaught upon the whole race, and upon all the Christian elements of the race, and then goes on still further charging them with doing all the bad things which his bad people in the days of slavery have compelled some of them to do. So much for Mr. Goodwin and all of that class represented by him.

Now, as to the white people in general, it is known that they do not even hold colored people in Christian fellowship. Putting all of these facts together, we are urged at this point to ask, what argument is there in comparing the instrumentalities of the M. E. Church with those of the A. M. E. Church? It matters not whether the former has but a single Bishop or the latter fourteen.

The colored people of the United States need just such clerical appliances as will rapidly advance them to the highest point of spiritual excellence. They are but slightly acquainted with the methods of church government. Even the ministry

self is not wrought up to that state of efficiency that prevails in organizations among white people. It is indeed far from it. There is a lack of many qualifications which are indispensable to success on the part of the colored clergy. Science, and literature, and theological studies have not been advanced by colleges, academies and seminaries as they have been in the M. E. Church; and so the untrained, suffering by these privations, have been compelled to go forth with the additional embarrassment caused by a want of experience. The consequences naturally following this state of things are too patent for any amplification. It is enough to know that they exist and need a remedy.

Apart from this fact, there are preponderating irregularities among colored people, caused by slavery, which give ground for one to say that "Although the assertion of Goodwin is absolutely false, it is true that there are many colored people in the United States who belong to church, but are in no sense Christians."

They will shout and sing like saints, whilst they act and live like devils. This is true beyond all controversy. They exist as subjects for some plastic hand to bring them from the form of Godliness unto the power of it. And here the question arises—What agency in the A. M. E. Church would be the most powerful in making that hand effective? Perhaps some insane man would like to hear some sane man give a pertinent answer: for some think themselves very sane indeed when they ignore every proposition that cannot be called their own.

Bearing still further on this point is the fact, moreover, that colored people outside of the Church everywhere go to a most woeful extent in profligacy. They waste their time in wild, senseless games. They degrade themselves in low grog-shop revelries. They incur divine wrath in Sabbath breaking indulgencies. They follow the highways of folly, fashion and sin. They form a great host of worldlings to be converted to the sacred fold, whilst a watchman on the walls of Zion cries out, "We want members! members! members!"

True. And that is the reason why the A. M. E. Church should have the force necessary to obtain them. The people on the seashore may cry out, "We want fish! fish! fish!" but the want will not be satisfied if the force is not sufficient to cast and haul the seine to get them. It requires more cler-

ical power of the highest order now to advance the interests of the colored people than it does for those who are ahead of them. Slavery has left many of them with crude notions concerning religion, and bad habits effecting society. It is plain to every man of reason that it requires extraordinary agencies to reach them, elevate them and redeem them. It requires a thoroughly organized force that will demand respect, engender love and give the spirit of inspiration. They have been left in a ditch and the appliance must be equal to the emergency.

Twenty-five years ago, hundreds of thousands of them knew nothing about church organization and government. They were insensible to the real honorable nature of the marital relationship, and lived according to the rule of the oppressor. Pitiful indeed was this condition of affairs, as observed by us at the close of the war, when we, Jas. A. Handy and all of us, went down South to organize church work. Moral darkness prevailed in every direction over those who had been kept in bondage. They were ignorant of letters, ignorant of rules and ignorant of everything essential to their moral development. Many more Bishops were needed than were available at that time.

Coming down from that period to the present, we find colored people laboring still under disadvantages, in an ecclesiastical sense, which are not experienced by any other class of people in the land. They are discarded, proscribed and left to work out their own destiny by depending upon their own resources. In this condition they stand merely upon the outer lines of the important works of the Church. They are mere tyros in great missionary projects, in extensive educational processes, in the advancement of charitable institutions and in the manipulation of all the machinery belonging to the establishment of the Church. They are like raw recruits waiting to be drilled into service. Some advancement have they made by the means at their command, but they are not up to the times. This general inefficiency, as a matter of course, has its bearing upon the A. M. E. Church. Surrounded by such obstacles it cannot make rapid progress without thorough organization. It cannot overcome those obstacles without the active, powerful, episcopal agencies which are necessary to forward on its interests in every direction. They must be put at its head because the condition of the colored people



needs just such a force to persevere against their discouragements and to overcome them. Such dignitaries, and just such a number of them as we have set forth, are needed to inspire the lower ranks of the clergy and build up the interests of the masses.

Apropos, Rev. H. T. Johnson, in writing of a Conference session at Owensboro, says: "Bishop Turner so grafted himself in the hearts of the people by his power and eloquence, that they classed him in the itinerant category, asked that he be left there; and prophesied the speedy revival of their church interest should their prayer be granted."

Here we have an illustration by a living fact. Let it be accepted in its full force according to the condition of the race and great will be the godly competition.

#### STRAY SHOTS.

If a point is proved an opponent can do nothing but accept it. He may be reluctant to yield, but common sense will compel him. If he resist this and continue in his course of making a whole list of groundless assertions, he shows himself to be like a boy who cannot swim, floundering in a pond. He makes a great splash, but fails to make any headway. In his failure to comply with reason he may find himself going to destruction. If the Church needs fourteen Bishops, and it will be to the very best advantage to situate them in a certain manner, then, by all means, it is reasonable to yield to the argument in the matter. Every attempt at resistance has no effect upon the truth.

Many remarks may be made to intensify them, but in the end they will only amount to declarations and stand no examination. In fact, they will be as bad as the old woman's exclamation: "My gracious, how much those twins resemble each other, especially the one this way!"

## CHAPTER XIX.

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THE CONNECTIONAL ASCENDENCY GAINED BY INCREASED  
EPISCOPAL EVANGELIZATION.

**G**REAT and exceedingly important is the topic now before us. Its grave bearing upon the subject of our argument causes me to ponder long before I attempted to form a sentence on it. Nothing that has been advanced; nothing that can be advanced, demands such serious consideration as "The Connectional ascendancy to be gained by increased Episcopal evangelization." The grandest efforts which can be made by any religious organization are those which are designed to Christianize the world. Nothing more sacred could be an incentive to justify the setting apart of a hundred Bishops. And it is at this point that I again acknowledge divine guidance, although I have been sacrilegiously gainsaid for even doing this.

Any branch of Church government that can be made subservient to the process of bringing souls to Christ, is worthy of the most extensive consecration to this "aim and object."

Bishops in the most exalted sense are the evangelists of the Church—the ones unto whom may be fittingly given the mandate—"Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying: the Kingdom of God is at hand." They are evangelists; and being able to prominently engage in the eucharistical services, they are more than evangelists as they stand before the people and tell them "that the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Eight more such personages, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, added to the half a dozen faithful ones now performing this holy work, would just give that much more force unto it. At any stated period throughout the land there could be simultaneously preached fourteen episcopal discourses instead of six. These would be eight times more effective than six, for each would produce its own individual effect. Marked impressions would be made upon multitudes of hearers who are not reached by the African Methodist Episcopal Church to day. By this increase of evangelical power, the peculiar cry for—"Members! members! members!"—would be answered with "cloven tongues of fire" and an upheaval of the elements of moral nature culminating in sound conversions and

fectual confirmations. The increased multitudes having the gospel preached unto them by such an illustrious band of episcopal evangelists, would be startled as by the "sound of a rushing mighty wind," and yield up hosts of converts to be added to the Connection. To sneer at this assumption is to put at a discount the preaching of the gospel.

The most important duty of a Bishop is to preach. He does more for the Connection by this means than he does by any parliamentary skill. His character attracts attention and creates a burning desire to hear him. Wherever he may go, he will find an anxious throng ready to listen to the word of God falling from his lips. Let him in their presence "do the work of an evangelist"—preach, reprove, rebuke, exhort—let him declare the whole truth, "reason of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come"—let him do all this and his proportion of work will be done in advancing the Connection. So much for one.

Increase the force, and just in proportion do you increase the ascendancy of the Connection. Let fourteen Bishops, all of one accord, at any time go forth and do the specific work of evangelists, and just so surely will the Holy Ghost attend their efforts and make incalculable the results. Sinners will be convicted, mourners will be converted and souls will be added to the Church. Let episcopal power be carried to the altitude of its efficiency in this direction, and the real worth of the organization behind it will produce the highest degree of joy among the angels. The Connection will show itself to be one of the grandest institutions existing for the Christianization of the world. It will, by this means, as it can by no other, be recognized as an indispensable auxiliary to all other Christian organizations. Just one fact will have a bearing on this point, Some years ago, Bishop Wayman preached in a certain part of Maryland to a mixed multitude and so seriously affected a white man in the congregation that he took a trip to Baltimore for the purpose of relieving his mind, but could get no rest night nor day, until he sought and obtained religion. Let the Connection provide the means to increase this kind of work and it will attain unto the highest object of its creation.

It will gradually exert a controlling influence among all the colored people of the land; it will reach them as it cannot reach them by any other medium. The holy plans which will

grow out of this arrangement--the consultations for the purpose of ascertaining the best means of effecting certain classes, the conclusions to go forth on a designated day to concentrate every effort on them, the united solicitation for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon revivals of religion and all the energy that can be directed for evangelism by the Bishops, will bring the colored population more signally under the influence of the A. M. E. Church than has ever been done in the course of its existence. Looking at the matter in this light, and considering the spiritual needs of the colored people, nothing greater, indeed, it may be asserted, can be designated as a means of building up the Connection.

In all the work of the ministry nothing has a more significant bearing upon the world than evangelization for its conversion. Nothing more seriously demands the attention and approbation of every true-born Christian. This is the process, sacred, noble and inestimable, that requires every evangelical organization to strain itself for its advancement. If no other proposition is worthy of consideration as a reason for making Bishops, presiding elders and pastors, this is all sufficient for the justification of the establishment of as many of them as are demanded for this holy purpose.

Let fourteen Bishops go forth as the evangelical pioneers of the A. M. E. Church and they will produce wonderful results. Let them be ordained and let them see the needs of the colored population as they alone can see them; and let them make provisions to meet those needs in every spiritual respect--let them make revival work frequently a specialty, appoint their days for each and all to preach at the same time in different parts of the country on what would be known as "The Bishops' Evangelical Day," and thus preaching all with one accord, they would arouse many of those whom they would find "dead in trespasses and sin," the work of the Lord would be revived from year to year, Christendom would be inspired and the Connection would be drawn nearer to other religious organizations to receive assistance from them. It would be conspicuous as the great evangelical body of the world and be accepted as the benefactor of every denomination. It would make such a grand display of the black man's moral worth that it would crush the racial libels emanating from the Episcopalian Church, beat back the enemies concentrated at given points to contest its onward movements and clear the way for earnest

work in every direction—for building up good societies, for advancing the missionary cause, for promoting education and increasing the love for temperance. It is impossible to recount all the good results which would follow on this line by the establishment of such a Board of Bishops. The whole race would be improved to such an extent that its voice would be irresistible in every part of the land. Reformation would be observed even among those who dwell in the slums and spend their money for grog. The aspiration for good would be increased in those who spend their thoughts upon the frivolities of life and disregard even the sanctity of the Sabbath day. Everywhere one would see the steady advancement in morals, religion, education and refinement. The Episcopal force—the primary cause of all these results—would truly make the Connection “more terrible than an army with banners.” Its increase to the highest state of its efficiency is as much of a necessity as is the appointment of pastors to various charges and the perpetuation of Conference sessions. Let the glorious work be done.

#### STRAY SHOTS.

“A little fun now and then  
Is relished by the wisest men.”

These “stray shots” are not fired off maliciously, but just as a sportsman shoots at his target. They give us a diversion from the hard work we have been doing for weeks to benefit the Church. And so we take up our gun to shoot at the marks put up before us. We aim now at the one designated by the inscription, “Superintendency.” It is like unto a target made of pasteboard, tissue paper and gauze. It is a kind of heterogeneous arrangement produced by hocus-pocus. One shot on knocking it to pieces will show it to be a confusion of diocesan and rotary methods with superintendency.

Any clear-headed fellow knows that superintendency is one thing and diocesanism and rotation are two other things. The one is a general system, and either one of the two things is a specific method by which you carry out the general system. Superintendency is nothing less than this either by diocesanism or rotation. The Episcopacy, as it has been carried on in the A. M. E. Church for more than a generation by the district system (which is far better than the rotary), is just as much a superintendency as it is by the rotary system. No one can confound it with either one of the subordinate methods with-

out resorting to legerdemain. His argument will be just as clear and consistent as the following sum in addition : 2 horses plus 4 pigs plus 6 sheep plus 24 men make 36. A general oversight of the Church is superintendency, no matter which method you adopt to observe it. I like our present one and am opposed to innovations—changes which weaken. The best thing for us to do is to improve the machinery we have instead of substituting it with something new. If we are all the while planting scions and cutting them down we will never have any trees.

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CHAPTER XX.

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THE URGENT DEMAND OF ALL DEPARTMENTS OF THE  
CHURCH FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE FORE-  
GOING ARGUMENT.

**W**HAT reason dictates to be done wisdom commands us all to do. The establishment of a project by incontrovertible argument, cannot be ignored without loss and inconvenience. When the Rebellion had its beginning in the United States, Gen. Sherman was consulted and asked how many men would be needed to crush it. He said 250,000 men. This assertion struck the wise-acres with surprise and they said that he was crazy. Disregard of his suggestion brought disaster, and time proved the correctness of his conclusion. After this he was again consulted, but said, "O, I don't like to give an opinion, for fear that they will say I am crazy." It is just so with some people who cannot see beyond their noses ; they think everybody else is a fool who can. But at the same time they never destroy the force of a fact.

If it is proved that we want more Bishops, as my learned friend, Dr. T. G. Steward, says it is ; if the argument all along the line germane to this subject has stood unassailable, as Bishop Brown's organ, *The Mouthpiece*, says it has; what else can we do in conclusion but endeavor to force the propositions home to every decent thinker? The sum and substance of the whole discussion now requires us to bring it to a focus.

All that we have said and proved must be subjected to, and settled according to the urgent demands of all departments of the Church. The cause of Missions, which has been suffering

ever since I have been in the itinerancy, and which could be made a meritorious cause in the sight of all the people, demands something more for its success than the display of the ablest powers of an able secretary. It requires the application of the greatest amount of ecclesiastical force that can be developed by an episcopal agency, systematized, districted, well defined and made thus to be of the most practical effect, so that the incumbents, trumpet-tongued and full of fire, can go in every section of the land and cry out, "The harvest fields are ripening and the laborers are few." Thousands upon thousands are waiting to give response to such a grand incentive.

The Publishing Department, prostrated and gyved like a mighty giant prevented from manifesting his strength to rise and stand upon his feet, says, "Let the twenty-eight hands of fourteen Bishops be applied to my outstretched form, and let the cheering order, 'Now then!' be uttered whilst a united effort is made to lift me, and I'll arise, stand upon my feet, break every fetter, shake my Samsonian locks and electrify the whole Connection." All the latent power of this circumscribed would-be great institution appeals unto the thinking men—the men of reason throughout the Church—to do that which will be the most efficient method of bringing about a grand and glorious development. Who would not spend five hundred dollars to make a thousand, and, moreover, to proportionably increase a people's moral worth?

The work of education is obscured like the light of the sun by a sombre cloud. It says to the Church, "Remove these obstructions and I will shine. Clear the way for me, and I will put a halo over every altar and a nimbus around the head of every priest. Let my course be uninterrupted and I will prove to you that in connection with the grace of God, 'knowledge is power.'" It pleads not for secretaries, but for Bishops, for an ample number of them, for men who, by virtue of their office, will be able to touch the heart of every multitude when they shall stand up and say, "Hear us for our cause, and be silent that you may hear." It pleads for Bishops to do this as Bishop Campbell did it at Asbury Park.

The Church Extension arrangements, the Sabbath school work and all, send up a plea in this direction. Let those whom it may concern, then, take heed and comply with the argument to sustain them. Let them pay due attention to—

1. The preliminary remarks made to guard them against cliques and combinations ;
2. The present condition of the Episcopacy ;
3. The great amount of Episcopal work that is to be performed ;
4. The character of the men needed to do it ;
5. The number of additional men required to do it ;
6. The men suitable for election to the office ;
7. The complement of them to be kept in existence ;
8. The means of preserving this complement ;
9. The regulation of the episcopal districts ;
10. The provisions to be made for the oldest Bishops ;
11. The business ideas to a greater extent needed in the episcopacy for the advancement of Church work ;
12. The animation created in Church organizations by episcopal visits ;
13. The necessity of having Bishops on extra occasions ;
14. The Connectional strength that will be manifested by an adequate number of these officials ;
15. The proselytes that will be made to African Methodism by the influence of such a complete board ;
16. The temporal advantages which will be gained by such a board ;
17. The power it would wield over the General Conference sessions ;
18. The condition of affairs peculiar to colored people that demands such a force ;
19. The Connectional ascendancy that will be gained by this increased means for episcopal evangelization ;
20. The urgent demand of all departments of the Church for a compliance with this argument—let them consider all these deductions in all their bearings in every direction, and just so surely as they do it reason will overcome prejudice and immature notions, so that no just one will say that the assumptions are erroneous. The truth will be admitted, the necessity will be observed, the benefits will be secured. It will be at once concluded that the all-important step should be taken to accomplish the work before us. It will be conceded that it should be done to reach the teeming millions—black, white and red, on the continent and on the islands in the Caribbean Sea. The power of the Lord God of Hosts will be invoked, every resource of the Church will be brought into command, and a



mighty assault will be made upon the unregenerated world. By thorough and substantial organization the Connection will be qualified for stupendous accomplishments between the present and the time to come, when the greater centennial period shall dawn in 1916. It is wise now to begin to make the organization develop its strength for that time. Let us at once put an end to all bickering, extinguish all jealousy, stamp out all envy, and cultivate love for one another so that we can build up the walls of Zion for the end of the century that is to come. Let us coolly, calmly and devoutly deliberate upon the propositions laid before us and let each one esteem others as better than himself. Whilst we weigh all these measures to make the Church stronger, and look forward to the period when the Connection shall have lived one hundred years, let us have no ill feeling towards each other. Let us put our candidates all in a row and then view them and make our selections from them. Far be it from any one concerned to abuse and villify any brother for the purpose of defeating him. This is an auspicious time for us to indulge in loving kindness that our hearts and minds may be blended together in a zealous manner for our Master's cause. The vintage is commanding us to do our best in supplying it with our ablest foremen to lead on in giving it efficient service. So important is this point in our argument, that personal relationship should always be discarded, and the qualification of the men be accepted. Taking this in connection with all the other weighty propositions, let us turn our attention to them that we may be blest in our decision. If we do this, great indeed will be our future progress! Step by step the old Church will move on in developing all its energies. It will bring in the talents of outside men and build up agencies to produce a moral effect in every avenue of life. It will by the grace of God make the very nation hear its voice in the time of peace and the time of war. Twenty-nine years hence, when this my labor of love shall be remembered or forgotten and a million of members shall have hearts all beating in unison to celebrate the great centennial year, they shall say: "We thank thee—

"That thou, O God, didst first inspire  
Our fathers with supreme desire;  
To found a Church whose creed should be  
The good of man, the love of thee."



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